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# Social Facts and Forces

Washington Gladden



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# SOCIAL FACTS AND FORCES

THE FACTORY—THE LABOR UNION  
THE CORPORATION—THE RAILWAY—THE  
CITY—THE CHURCH

BY  
WASHINGTON GLADDEN

Author of "Applied Christianity," "Tools and the Man"  
"Who Wrote the Bible?" etc.



G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS  
NEW YORK & LONDON  
The Knickerbocker Press

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## PREFACE

THIS book is an attempt to discover in what manner the well-being of the people is affected by the changes which are taking place in our industrial and social life. The interest of all these studies is primarily ethical; what kind of men and women we are getting to be is the thing I wish to know.

The reader will soon find out that these words have been spoken; their direct and familiar style will make that plain; I should like to have him feel that they are spoken to him.

They were given, in the winter of 1895-6, to an audience in Steinway Hall, Chicago, as the "Ryder Lectures"—upon a foundation laid by the eminent and much-lamented pastor of St. Paul's Universalist Church in that city, the Rev. William Henry Ryder, D.D. The lectures of this course, by the direction of its founder, were to be "in aid of the moral and social welfare of the citizens of Chicago, upon

an anti-sectarian basis"; and the pastors of the First Universalist, First Presbyterian, and First Congregational Churches, with the Mayor of the City and the Superintendent of the Public Schools, were made the custodians of the fund.

The next year the lectures were repeated as the "E. A. Rand Course on Applied Christianity," before the students of Iowa College and the citizens of Grinnell, Iowa.

It is unnecessary to say that the themes discussed in these six lectures are only treated in outline. No one will expect to find within a space so limited an adequate investigation of subjects so large. I have tried to seize upon some of the salient points, and especially to emphasize the tendencies which affect conduct and shape character.

WASHINGTON GLADDEN.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,  
COLUMBUS, O., Sept. 17, 1897.






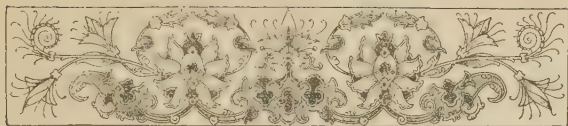
## CONTENTS

	I.		PAGE
THE FACTORY . . . . .			I
	II.		
THE LABOR UNION . . . . .			44
	III.		
THE CORPORATION . . . . .			82
	IV.		
THE RAILWAY . . . . .			116
	V.		
THE CITY . . . . .			155
	VI.		
THE CHURCH . . . . .			192





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## SOCIAL FACTS AND FORCES

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### I

#### THE FACTORY

THE pages which follow are devoted to an elementary study of a few of the more important of those social questions which are now forcing themselves upon the attention of all intelligent and patriotic Americans. Every generation has social questions of its own, because in every generation of a progressive people "the old order changeth, giving place to new," and new adjustments of thought and life are constantly demanded. But the day in which we live is one in which the movements are more rapid and the changes more radical than the world has ever before witnessed, and the obligation laid upon us of watching these movements and guiding these changes is corre-

spondingly stringent. For I suppose that we have some control over these social forces; that we may check them, and direct them to beneficent ends. There is a materialistic doctrine of political economy which represents them as unchangeable, inexorable, irreversible; which assumes that human will can do nothing to modify human conditions. The doctrine is false and mischievous. We may be very thankful that it is an obsolescent doctrine; that few of the modern leaders of economic thought accept it. Fatalism in political economy is only a little less pernicious than in theology. We must start in political economy with the doctrine of the freedom of the will; and we must believe that communities as well as men can do what they ought to do; that the intelligence and the conscience of any community can assail and remove recognized evils. We are not hopelessly drifting in the current of social progress; we may shape our own course and choose our own port. The business of the farmer is not to let nature have free course upon his fertile acres, and simply reap what she brings forth; for, if that were his policy, his harvest would be weeds and brambles; his business is to subdue and rule nature, and the more fertile the soil the greater the need of such subjugation; there must be fences and hedges, dikes for the streams, ditches for the

swamps, deep plowing, diligent weeding, careful cultivation, the steady application of intelligence and will to these fertile acres. And think you that in our social or national husbandry we can any more wisely dispense with patience and vigilance and self-sacrificing toil? I tell you nay. Society will no more bring forth peace and liberty and order and welfare spontaneously, than your land will bring forth wheat and corn and grapes and peaches spontaneously. Civilization does not grow wild; it is not a natural product; it is a product of the finest of the arts; it is the work of reason and conscience and benevolence.

Not only have we something to do with the shaping of our social life, but what we have to do requires us to be studious and alert and prompt and resolute. "Watch ye!" is good counsel for the patriot as well as for the Christian. "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty," said Andrew Jackson, and it is equally the price of every element of social welfare. The evils that disturb our peace and poison our prosperity steal in noiselessly; before we are aware of it, the whole structure of society is changed; great tyrannies are intrenched, social parasites have become vested interests, and influences are at work to paralyze law, to pervert conscience, and to undermine the very foundations of the commonwealth.

It seems to me that this kind of work is going on now, more busily and fatally, perhaps, than ever before, and that it is a time for all thoughtful and conservative citizens to give earnest heed to the social movements that are in progress before their faces.

We may not all be aware of it, but it is a fact that the industrial order has been completely revolutionized within the last half century. I doubt whether the ethical bearings of the new régime of industry have been adequately thought out. I doubt whether we are all as clear in our minds as we ought to be, as to what our duties are in all these new relations. We all know that we ought to love our neighbors as ourselves, but the question "Who is my neighbor?" is a great deal more puzzling just now than it was when a certain lawyer propounded it, "down in Judee." Here are corporations, companies, pools, trusts, combines, trades-unions, arbeiter-bunds,—are they our neighbors? How should the Christian law govern us in our dealings with them? Possibly we are members of some of these organizations ourselves; if so, the question is still more complicated. And it appears to me that the careful study of these new relations and of the duties growing out of them is just now imperative. In these discussions some such studies will be undertaken.



The great social fact upon which I now desire to fix your attention is the fact that industry, in modern times, is prosecuted by means of the principle of association; men are associated in their work as they were not in former times; capitalists and organizers of labor, and inventors and designers, and skilled artificers and manual laborers are brought together in great co-operating companies, and made to labor together for a common product. There has always been, of course, some social tendency in the development of industry; men have always found it pleasanter to work in company than to work alone; and in the rudest civilizations they have assisted one another, and by combining their efforts and exchanging their products have increased their powers. But the organization of industry on the large scale, in the mine, in the railway company, and in the factory, is a recent fact. One hundred years ago, or a little more, all the textile fabrics in use were manufactured in the homes of the people; the spinning-wheel and the hand-loom were part of the furniture of nearly every well-ordered country house; the woollen and the linen cloth and the linsey-woolsey were spun and woven by the women of the household. There was generally a carding-mill, and a fulling- and dressing-mill somewhere in the neighborhood, patronized by the

farmers, just as they patronized the grist-mill or the blacksmith's shop; they took their wool to the mill to be carded for spinning, and their cloth, after it was woven, to be fulled and dyed and dressed; the primitive woollen-mill simply assisted or supplemented the domestic manufacture, and its work was mainly if not wholly custom work. Even in my boyhood this domestic system lingered; the winter clothing of the household to which I belonged was nearly all spun and woven in the farmhouse.

Although there was a section of the population in those earlier days which did not produce any textile fabrics, yet the wants of this section were supplied, not as now by larger factories, but by spinners and weavers who wrought with their hand implements in their own houses. The trade of the weaver was carried on in his own house; he bought the yarn from the spinners and sold the cloth to his neighbor or to the merchant; by and by, when trade became more highly organized, there were middlemen who bought the yarn of the spinners, and paid the weavers by the yard for weaving it. Most of those who spun and wove lived in the country, often just outside the villages, on little plots of ground which they cultivated, raising a large share of their own food. Of course the system of organized manufacture and this domestic system ran on for a long

time together; small factories, in which the work was to some extent systematized, were in operation here and there while yet the great bulk of the textile manufacture was done in the homes of the people. These methods were also combined. Part of the work would be done in the factory, and part of it would be distributed to workers in the homes, and there performed. I remember that forty or fifty years ago, in New England, certain branches of industry were carried on in this way—the braiding of whips, the plaiting of straw for hats, the covering of buttons, and the like. Rolls of the leathern strands of whip-lashes were obtained from the factory at Westfield, Mass., by the girls of the farms in the towns round about, were braided at their homes, and carried back to Westfield. Many of these farmers' girls gained their pin-money in these home industries. In the early days of manufacturing in New England, much of the work was thus distributed, as a considerable part of the clothing manufacture is to-day distributed, among the homes of the people.

This great industry of the needle and the sewing-machine, by which so many women earn a meagre livelihood, is, however, almost the only industry of any importance which has not wholly submitted to the new order of things. The domestic system of manufacture,

as you all know, has been superseded, almost everywhere, by the factory system; it is true not only of the textile industries, but of almost all the rest, that they are no longer carried on by isolated toilers, but that they are prosecuted by great co-operative groups, the work being wonderfully subdivided and systematized, so that many different persons co-operate in the production of the simplest article; so that the joint labors of many tend to one result.

The foundation of this factory-system is, of course, invention. Out of the invention of the spinning-jenny and the power loom sprang the cotton-mill. And with the power of invention was coupled the principle of the division of labor. Machinery can best be used for single processes. A machine to make as simple a product as a yard of cotton cloth it would not be easy to construct. But if you can divide the whole operation into a dozen or twenty different processes, a machine may be contrived which will perform each one of these processes.

“A factory,” says Colonel Wright, “is an establishment where several workmen are collected for the purpose of obtaining greater and cheaper conveniences for labor than they could procure individually at their homes; for securing results by their combined efforts which they could not ac-

comply separately ; and for preventing the loss occasioned by carrying articles from place to place during the several processes necessary to complete their manufacture. The principle of a factory is that each laborer, working separately, is controlled by some associating principle which directs his producing power to effect a common result, which it is the object of all collectively to attain. Factories are therefore the legitimate outgrowth of the universal tendency to association which is inherent in our nature, and by the development of which all industrial success has been gained ; and from this principle springs the necessity for subdivision of labor, without which the factory system would have made but feeble growth.”<sup>1</sup>

The extension of this method of industry has been wonderfully rapid during the last century. Besides the textile industries,

“remarkable instances of the application of the system are to be found, in the manufacture of boots and shoes, of watches, of musical instruments, clothing, agricultural implements, metallic goods generally, fire-arms, carriages and wagons, wooden goods, rubber goods, and even in the slaughtering of hogs. Most of these industries have been brought under the factory system within the past thirty years. It is but a comparatively few years since the manufacture of boots and shoes was carried on in the little home shops which were at-

<sup>1</sup> See *Journal of Social Science*, No. xvi., p. 102.



tached to or built near the dwellings of the shoemakers. These little shops, in which a few men, rarely more than four, worked upon the bench, upon stock received from the manufacturer, cut out and ready to be put together, are closed, and the great shoe-factory takes their place. In the shoe-factory is to be seen the perfect adaptation of the manufacture of goods by successive, harmonious processes. The shoe-factory is rapidly doing away with the clogs of England, and the sabots of the continent. The watch-factory presents, perhaps, the most completely scientific application of the factory system."<sup>1</sup>

It is not necessary to dwell upon this fact; most of us have before our eyes every day striking instances of the extent to which industrial operations can be subdivided and systematized. The same spectacle is visible everywhere. Of the three or four millions of people engaged in the mechanical industries of this country, we are told that at least four-fifths are working under the factory system.

Now this is a great fact, and it behooves us all to study it and to comprehend its nature and its influence. It is not merely an economic, but a social phenomenon; it affects not only our pockets but our heads and our hearts; it has a great deal to do with the development of character in individuals, with the life of our

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

homes, with the structure of our society, with the strength of our laws, with the peace of our neighborhoods, with the welfare of the state. Indeed it is probable that the deepest and most powerful influences that are shaping the moral life of the people are found in such movements as we are now studying, by which the industrial processes of a whole people are quietly revolutionized. We do not always discern the operation of these social forces. We are quick, as one writer has said, to discover the significance of political enactments, like the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, or the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law, but we do not consider that the very constitution of society may be radically changed by silent and slow-working causes.

“It is not readily understood that men without ideas, except those that appertain to ordinary life—men without intention, except to get a living and to please their fancies—may by their aggregate action evolve customs and develop institutions which shall have power to change the currents of national life.”<sup>1</sup>

Yet this is a fact to which we may well take heed. Nothing is more certain than that this industrial transition—you may call it evolution or revolution—is fraught with very grave con-

<sup>1</sup> *Atlantic Monthly*, July, 1888.

sequences to the working-classes, and to the whole people.

That it has greatly increased the wealth of the country is not to be doubted. By this principle of division and combination, the efficiency of labor has been almost miraculously enhanced. No one can tell just how great is this multiplication of power and product, but it has been estimated that each factory worker under the new system, with the latest and best machinery, will produce as much as fifty laborers could have done by hand in the old solitary processes. The four millions of our factory workers could thus add to the sum of human comfort every year as much as two hundred millions could have given us under the old régime. When we reflect that the spinner, with the modern machine, can spin eleven hundred threads as rapidly as the spinner with the old hand-wheel could spin one, we see that this high estimate rests upon some solid facts. These four millions of factory workers produce nine billions of dollars' worth of manufactured goods in the country every year. It is an enormous product. No man can form any adequate conception of it. We repeat the figures glibly, but it is almost impossible to comprehend so vast a quantity. Their annual addition to the national wealth is due, in large measure, to the development of the factory system.

Out of such a prodigious store of wealth, all classes of the people ought to be able to obtain some considerable increase of comfort and happiness. Beyond question all classes do share in this product. The factory system has enriched us all, to some extent. The poorest working-man is able to enjoy as the common comforts of life many things that were luxuries, but a little while ago, even among the well-to-do classes. Beautiful paper-hangings and pictures for his wall, pretty china for his table, carpets for his floors, musical instruments for his parlor, a watch in his pocket, tasteful raiment for his wife and children—all these are quite within the reach of the common laborer. I do not deny that he ought to have more than he gets, in view of the enormous wealth which his labor helps to produce; but the fact remains that he has been, on the side of material comfort and welfare, greatly the gainer by the factory system.

In a sanitary point of view the factory system has brought him certain benefits and certain injuries. In most of the great manufacturing establishments, pains are taken to secure plenty of air and light, and to furnish the workman with pleasant and healthful surroundings. I have no doubt that the vast majority of the operatives in the great mills and manufactories have healthier rooms to work in than the aver-

age domestic worker of the last century was able to provide.

The effect of factory work upon the health of women and girls is not, however, always good, and it is a fact that in some industries—the cotton trade particularly—the factory system opens the way for the employment of many women.

That there is great mortality among the infant children of those mothers who work in factories seems to be clear. Colonel Wright gives statistics gathered from factory towns in Massachusetts and Rhode Island, as compared with agricultural towns in the same States; and it appears that while of children under five years of age there are between two and three deaths per thousand of the population in the agricultural towns, there are in the manufacturing towns of Rhode Island seven deaths per thousand of children under five; and in the Massachusetts factory towns ten deaths per thousand. It is not, however, certain that the mortality is wholly due to the factory; it may be due, as we shall presently see, to the unsanitary condition of life in the towns—to the houses in which these people live, more than to the work about which they are employed. So far as the factory entices married women from their homes and leads them to neglect the proper care of their young children, its



effects upon the health of the people must be highly injurious. Doubtless some married women whose husbands are either sick or worthless, are enabled by this means to provide for their households; yet it is an open question whether, on the whole, the employment of married women in factories is not productive of more harm than good. The late Professor Jevons, one of the most eminent of the English economists, after a thorough study of the subject, advocated a law forbidding the employment in factories of the mothers of children under three years old. I should be glad to see such a law enacted in every State in this Union.

Child-labor has been increasing very rapidly in this country—much faster than the population. I shall have more to say about it by and by. The effect of this upon the health of the children can only be evil. To shut up young children in these busy, noisy rooms, to expose their delicate nerves to the clatter and roar of machinery, to tie them down to the tendance of the fierce, relentless shapes of steel that whirl, and spin, and smite, all day long, must dry up the very sources of life in many of them.

It is also true that the factory system gathers into cities great multitudes of the population; and the tenement houses, in which these opera-

tives must live in the cities, are often wholly unfit for human habitation. The country homes in which the great majority of our mechanical laborers lived fifty years ago, were far more healthful than those in which the great majority of laborers are now living in our great cities. Of course it is true that many of our factories are not in great cities, but in factory villages, and in the suburbs of large towns. Here the sanitary conditions are often much better. But so far as the factory has had the effect to draw laborers from the country into the great cities, where rent is dear and the population instead of being spread over the surface of the earth is composted together in great heaps, so far it must work detriment to public health. The conditions of urban life are not necessarily injurious, as we shall see; but, as things now are, in most working-class quarters, they must be so reckoned.

The effect of the factory upon the home life will be considered a little later; the question we are now considering is its effect upon the health of the working-people; and we find that it is not altogether beneficial. Nevertheless, I am inclined to think that the balance is still decidedly on the side of benefit; that the workers in our factories to-day, male and female, live longer and with less suffering than those of the same class lived a hundred years ago.

One statement can hardly be questioned: the factory system, as it now exists, is vastly better for the work-people, both as to thrift and health, than the remnant of the domestic system of industry which now exists. Mr. Booth's investigations in London made it clear that the workmen in factories are in far better case, as a rule, than those who work in their own homes. The sanitary conditions are better, the wages are higher, the families live in greater comfort. The investigations published in the *Hull House Papers* establish the same conclusion. The sweating system is a relic of the domestic system, and the garment trade, in many of our cities, is largely in the hands of sweaters. Probably the gain to health and thrift would be very great if this entire business were abolished, and the whole garment trade were carried on in factories.

In these two respects, then, we may say that the factory system—the new system of organized industry—is proving its beneficence: it is increasing the physical comfort and the health of mankind.

But now we come to a series of effects of which we must speak with even less positiveness; in which it is not easy to balance the gains and the losses; in which we can see that the factory, as at present managed, is sometimes helpful and sometimes hurtful to society.

1. The factory, as we have seen, is a social force. It brings people together. It gathers men and women from the scattered hamlets and the lonely hillsides, and groups them in close neighborhood. Is not this a benefit? Is not the deepest instinct of our nature the social instinct? Was it not said in the beginning, "It is not good for man that he should be alone"? Is not the institution that brings people into close relations, so far forth, a good institution?

Yes, if it does not bring them into too close relations. Hermitage is not good, but neither is huddling. The factory life, as we have seen, often does result in overcrowding, and that is no better for morals than for health. Good neighborhood requires some space between neighbors—not high fences, necessarily, but good margins.

Moreover, it must not be forgotten that society is a clear benefit only to those whose natures are essentially social. Society is not useful to lions or hyenas. Creatures that are inclined to rend each other had better keep as far apart as possible. For the victims of some contagious diseases, also, isolation is better than society. If then the factory brings together those who are of unsocial nature, and those who are tainted with contagious vices, the effect upon their morals of bringing them

together may be the reverse of beneficial. And there can be no question that many such communities, under the law of action and reaction, wax worse and worse continually, corrupt and corrupting one another, vile and defiling one another, the bad influences keeping the ascendancy, and carrying the society steadily downward by the gravitation of depravity. And this is a problem that must be faced by every man who has anything to do with organizing such an industrial community. He is bound to provide, if possible, against such a result as this. He must remember that no amount of material success could be counted as any compensation for such a moral catastrophe. He must use every means within his power to cause this association to be beneficial and not hurtful to the persons associated. He must exclude, so far as he can, all baneful influences, and supply, so far as he can, the means of moral sanitation. Men who are brought together in great industrial establishments are sometimes to one another a savor of death unto death, and are sometimes a savor of life unto life. The choice, the purpose, the personal influence of the employer and manager may have much to do in determining which of these results shall follow.

2. The factory system, as at present administered, tends to divide the community into

two great classes of capitalists and laborers. The company or the corporation owns the mill or the manufactory, owns the machines, owns the materials, owns, very often, the houses in which the work-people live; the workmen own nothing but the little furniture in their homes. Formerly every workman was himself a capitalist. He owned his tools, almost invariably; the laborer owned his spade, the woodman his axe, the weaver his loom. Tools are the primordial forms of capital. When employment failed, the workmen of former times could do a little work with their tools on their own account. Often, too, these workmen possessed a bit of land, or had permanent residence upon some small holding, and cultivated it, at odd seasons. Now, however, the factory worker, as a rule, has no capital at all; he has no home of his own; he possesses no tools of his own; when the mill shuts down he has nothing to do, nor would it be possible for him to use, in working on his own hook, the skill and faculty that he has acquired in the factory, because the thing that he has learned to do is some minute part of a process, and he knows nothing about the other related parts of it. In the old time, a wagon-maker out of work could go to work and make a wagon, and sell it to anybody who might want it; how many of the thousand men employed in the great factories

in my own town could do any such thing? Thus, while the working man of former times was always a capitalist, and might easily be his own employer, the factory workman of the present time possesses no working capital, and is greatly disabled by the system itself from employing himself; when the work shuts down his hands hang helpless by his side.

Moreover, the intellectual loss resulting from this specialization of function is, in my belief, considerable. The man who spends his days in tending a machine, or in performing some small fractional part of a constructive process, gains expertness at the expense of discipline. He can do this one thing very rapidly; but his judgment is not trained, nor is his taste developed, nor his constructive power stimulated. He loses that sagacity, that enterprise, that fertility of resource, which was characteristic of the mechanic of a former generation. When the canny New Englander was asked his occupation and answered, "A Yankee, by trade, and I work at it," his reply was significant. This ready faculty is not cultivated by factory work. So far, therefore, as the mechanical trades have been superseded by factory processes the workers have suffered some intellectual loss. But it is undoubtedly true that much of the factory work is now done by a class of people who were not, under the old



régime, skilled workmen—by those who belonged to the lower order of laborers, and to them the discipline of the factory may have been beneficial. That there are gains along this line as well as losses, I can see; and I am not clear as to the net result. Colonel Wright, who is an enthusiastic defender of the factory system, thinks that the balance is heavily on the right side, but I am not sure. Doubtless the general intelligence of the laboring classes has increased; whether this increase is due to the manner of their work, or has taken place in spite of it, is not to my mind very clear.

These phenomena that we are studying are only phases of the general fact that the factory system, as at present administered, tends to divide the industrial community into two great classes; on the one side the capitalists, the organizers, the leaders, the thinkers; on the other side the people without resources, whether pecuniary or intellectual; the people whose only reliance is upon the labor of their hands, and who are able to use their hands only in certain fractional parts of industries.

This is the economic fact, and the social fact corresponds with it too closely. In the days of the domestic system, there was no social distinction between capitalist and laborer. In the early period of the factory system in this country, the distinction was not sharply made.

As a writer in the *Atlantic Monthly* told us some years ago, the proprietor of the factory in the early times often put his own children into the mill as operatives; the girls who wrought at his looms were his neighbor's daughters, with whom his own daughters were on terms of social equality; they were all Americans, and there were no social barriers. "I have known of one instance," says this writer, "of an intimate friendship existing, during the middle of the century, between two thoughtful women, one of whom was the mill owner's wife, and the other an operative in the factory." Such instances were not, I think, rare in New England, thirty or forty years ago. And when the writer adds, with perfect justice, "Just such a friendship would be scarcely a conceivable possibility under existing circumstances; only philanthropic intentions could bring about even its shadow," she points out one of the social tendencies of the factory system which is not at all reassuring.

Of course this is due in part to the fact that in our great textile factories in New England—and to a great extent in all our factories throughout the Northern States—the operatives are now largely of foreign birth, and the barrier of race has arisen to obstruct the social relations of employer and employed. But this is not the whole of it. There has been on the

part of employers in general a perceptible increase of aristocratic feeling. The social gulf between the men who direct the work and the men and women who do the work is steadily widening. In many cases the families of the capitalists do not live near their establishments. The wife and children of the great employer do not find congenial society among the work-people and their overseers; they do not seem to think that they owe them any duty, and they prefer to live at a safe distance from them—beyond the possibility of contact with them. Thus we have, in many cases, the substance of that old curse of absenteeism, which has fallen like a blight upon poor Ireland—the entire separation of the landlord from his tenants; the unnatural divorce of classes that ought to be closely bound together by the ties of mutual interest and affection. Where the factory is a great corporation this social separation of the owners from the work-people is almost always absolute; the stockholders and directors live in some distant city; few of them ever visit the place where the work is done; the only person who comes in contact with the work-people, as employer, is the agent or manager, who is himself a hired man, and who cannot very adequately express to the employees the personal interest of the capitalists whom he represents. It is true, that some of

these agents are men of great intelligence and humanity, who study the welfare of the work-people as well as the interest of the capitalists; and it is true, also, as I believe, that the directors of many of these corporations are, during recent years, taking earnest thought for the work-people, and that they often give their agents and managers ample power to consider and promote their welfare; nevertheless, the fact of absenteeism remains; the capitalists, for whom the work is done, have, as a rule, no personal knowledge whatever of the laborers by whom it is done; there is no opportunity for friendship and kindly offices between them; all that the employer stands for to the employed, is a reservoir out of which so much stipend can be drawn per week or month; all that the employed stands for to the employer, is a force—labor-force he calls it—out of which so much profit can be made in a year.

Thus we see that while the factory is a social force in one way, it may become and in fact is becoming an unsocial force in another; it draws together in close relations people of the same class, but it tends, at present, to separate classes—to dig chasms and build barriers between the capitalists and the laborers, the employers and the employed. And it cannot be denied that this unsocial tendency is very strong in many quarters. The *Atlantic* essay-

ist quotes the remark of the superintendent of a mill to the overseer of one of the departments: "I want you to understand that when you come into this mill you are to hang up your sympathies on the same nail with your coat and hat." Probably the superintendent had received the same instructions for substance from his directors. And there are many, unfortunately, who do not consider themselves under any responsibility for the welfare of their work-people, and will not even bestow upon them the same measure of care that they would give to the mules in their factory stables.

Nevertheless, it must be said that although this division of the people into economical and social classes has taken place in connection with the development of the factory system, *it is no essential part of the system*. The factory system lends itself readily to higher and better forms of association. There is no reason why the working-people should not be associated as capitalists with the enterprises in which they are employed. They might be encouraged to become owners of the stock, as they are at Oldham, England. They might be more directly interested on the principle of industrial partnership, or profit-sharing. They may even unite, in their own persons, as co-operative producers, the functions of capitalist and laborer. And there is no necessity, in any case,

of that social stratification which we have been deploring. It is possible for the capitalist employer to fill up by his good-will the social chasm that separates him from his employees. There is no such chasm in the Familistere at Guise, in France. There is no such chasm in the great iron factory of the Tangye Brothers at Birmingham. There is no such chasm in the Cheney silk mills at Manchester, Connecticut, nor in the Fairbanks scale works at St. Johnsbury, Vermont, nor in the Proctor and Gamble Company at Cincinnati, nor in the Nelson Manufacturing Company at St. Louis, nor in the Acme Sucker Rod Company in Toledo. In all these places, and many others, the employers, living in the midst of their work-people, studying their welfare continually, thinking of their interests, providing in numberless ways for their comfort and happiness, spending their lives, indeed, in gracious and kindly ministries to those in their employ, have succeeded in counteracting and cancelling the unsocial tendencies of the present system of industry, and in making it nobly serviceable, not only to the material well-being of all their associates, but also to their intellectual and moral welfare.

3. The effect of the factory system upon the home life is a great inquiry to which I can give but a cursory glance. If we study the factory

proper, in the great textile industries—the cotton and woollen mills of New England—we shall find, I think, that its influence upon family life has been, on the whole, injurious. Colonel Wright disputes this conclusion, but my own observation supports it. The great majority of these manufacturing corporations own the tenements in which the work-people live. As a general rule, these tenements are comfortable, and the rent is cheap; the external conditions of the home are not untoward, except that the houses in these factory villages are sometimes too closely packed together. But the home life of people who live in hired houses is never deeply rooted. When you come upon a whole village, as you often do in New England, in which the people are almost all renters; in which the houses are all owned by the proprietors of the mill about which they are grouped, you need not expect to find in these households the sentiment of home blooming very luxuriantly. These people are not, as a general rule, attached to the houses that they live in, nor to the neighborhood in which they live. They cannot afford to form such attachments. The uncertainty of employment makes it highly probable that they will be compelled to move on, before many months, to some other locality. Home life will not flourish under such conditions.



Nor is this flitting life conducive to any kind of integrity. When, by a sudden change of residence, a family may hope to avoid the payment of troublesome bills, impermanence is found to possess decided financial advantages. But a household whose members frequently

“Fold their tents like the Arabs,  
And silently steal away,”

to avoid the emissaries of the butcher and the grocer, is a household in which the finer virtues are not wont to flourish. Whatever effect this factory system has to promote instability of life among the laboring classes, must be counted as hostile to the family.

That fact which we were considering a little while ago, that married women are employed to so large an extent in many of our factories, must, as a matter of course, have injurious effects upon the home life. Under the old domestic system the women workers wrought at home. The spinner or the weaver performed her daily task with her children round about her, and could turn, in the pauses of her toil, to attend to the wants of her household. The home was not deserted, nor were the children neglected. But the mother of many a household in a factory village leaves her home before seven o'clock in the morning, and returns to it, if at all, only for a few minutes in the mid-

dle of the day, until after six o'clock in the evening. You can judge for yourselves what home must be without any more mother in it than that.

But the influence of the factory upon the home begins even earlier. Tens of thousands of girls spend all their girlhood within the walls of the factory. The hours are so long and the work so laborious that they have no time nor strength to study and practise the fine art of housewifery; nor is it generally true that the schooling of the mill develops grace and gentleness. Most of these girls are married, sooner or later—and they are quite as apt to be married sooner as later. They are wholly destitute, of course, of domestic tastes and aptitudes. You can imagine the kind of homes that they will make.

Now I am well aware that the opportunity of self-support which the factory offers is to some women a great boon; and doubtless the comfort of many households is increased by the earnings of women in such places. It is difficult to see how some families could subsist if the opportunity were withdrawn. Nevertheless, the fact that the factory invites women to enter so numerously into the ranks of the bread-winners, is a fact that must be well considered in making up our estimate of it as a social force. In the natural order, as I be-

lieve, man is the bread-winner and woman is the home-builder. An industrial arrangement that tends to subvert this natural order is of doubtful benefit. Many men, it is true, are quite willing to let the women of their households go out and earn wages to support the family, and are willing themselves to live on what their wives and daughters bring in; but it is not clear that a system which encourages this ought to be unreservedly commended. That the factory system, under purely economic forces, does produce this precise result cannot be denied. The constant tendency is to replace male by female labor. Mr. Hobson gives figures covering the leading industries of Great Britain for the fifty years between 1841 and 1891; and they show that while the number of male workers increased during this period from 1,030,600 to 1,576,100, the number of female workers increased from 463,000 to 1,447,500. That is, while the number of male workers had increased 53 per cent., the number of female workers had increased 221 per cent. And his conclusions, drawn from a full survey of the field, are " (1) that the tendency of modern industry is to increase the quantity of wage work given to women as compared with that given to men; (2) that the tendency is specially operative in manufacturing industries; (3) that in the manufacturing industries

the increased rate of female employment is greatest in those industries where machinery has been most largely developed."'<sup>1</sup> All this is just as true of America as of England. The tendency of the factory system, when it is left to the control of purely economic forces, is to the displacement of men by women in the manufacturing industries. Every year some work that was formerly done by men falls into the hands of women and children. In many of the planing mills and sash and blind factories of Chicago and of Wisconsin, women are now employed at from 30 to 60 cents a day, to do work for which men in some States receive \$2.50 a day.

It may be supposed that the earnings of the women and children are added to the earnings of the men and thus increase the family income; but the fact is that the women and children generally drive the men out of business; and, even when this is not the case, their competition brings down his wages, so that the entire earnings of the family, when husband, wife, and children are all employed, are apt to be less than are the earnings of the man in employments which have not been invaded by the competition of women and children.

On the whole, therefore, I am inclined to believe that the replacement of men by women

<sup>1</sup> *The Evolution of Modern Capitalism*, p. 292.

in factories works economic injury. But what we are now specially considering is its effect upon the home. That the employment of so many women in factories must have disastrous effects upon the home cannot be questioned.

“Factory life for women,” says Mr. Hobson, “save in extremely rare cases, saps the physical and moral health of the family. The exigencies of factory life are inconsistent with the position of a good mother, a good wife, or the maker of a home. Save in extreme circumstances, no increase of the family wage can balance these losses, whose values stand upon a higher qualitative level.”<sup>1</sup>

Still it must be remembered that the employment of women and girls in factories is *no essential part of the factory system*. It is a feature of the present administration of this system, but it might be eliminated. I am inclined to think that the perfected society of the New Jerusalem will find higher and finer work for women to do than tending machinery. And I hope that the progress of the ages will steadily lift from their shoulders the heavier burdens of physical toil.

Another serious fact to be considered in this connection, is the fact that the factory system entirely breaks up the home life of hundreds of thousands; that is to say, it withdraws them

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

from such homes as they have, and requires them to take up their abode in boarding-houses. A great number, perhaps the majority, of the operatives and mechanics employed in our large manufacturing establishments are young people away from home, living in boarding-houses. This seems to be an essential feature of the system at the present time. The workers in these mills and shops come into the cities and towns from the country places. The work could not be carried on, I suppose, without these levies upon the rural districts. And, in the shifting state of our industries, it is very often necessary that the young people of the families should go from one city or town to another in search of work. Thus they are separated from their homes and live among strangers. The massing of these homeless young people in all our manufacturing towns and cities is a feature of the present system, and one that ought to be well considered. What the perils are that surround young men and women away from home I need not stop to indicate; what are the duties of the community, and especially of the organizers of industry, to this class I will not undertake to say. It is evident that here are social conditions which demand the most earnest attention of every philanthropist.

After all is said, however, we must keep it

constantly before our minds that the factory system is here, and that it has come to stay. Its economical advantages are so obvious and commanding that it cannot be superseded. The work of the world will be done, henceforth, more and more, by the associative methods. Doubtless there are evils connected with the present administration of this system; our business is to study these and counteract them. We cannot be too vigilant in this study, nor too prompt in this resistance. Doubtless, too, there are possibilities of good in the system which we must discover and develop. Its foundation is laid, as we have seen, in the social nature of man. The factory is a form of social organization. If man is made for society rather than for solitude, then the factory falls in with the deepest principles of human nature. But we must find out what the law of human society is, and see that the factory conforms to that law. If the cement of human society everywhere is love, then we must not suppose that we can have a coherent and prosperous society in the factory, or anywhere else, that ignores love and trusts wholly to selfishness as the bond of union.

We are touching here the nerve of the whole question. I think it is the German Dorner who has said that the ethical has an ontological significance. This rather formidable propo-



sition means simply that the only thing that really is is goodness.

“What is excellent  
As God lives is permanent.”

No social order will endure that is not founded on love. And the social mechanisms and contrivances which are not based on good-will, which do not constantly invoke it, and employ it, and provide for it, will produce material wealth at the price of social disintegration and dissolution.

“At every point,” says a modern economist, “economic advance, increase in temporal good, waits, in last analysis, upon spiritual advance, increase in moral good.” That is the natural order, but we have inverted it. We have pushed our material development with but slight regard for the moral elements with which it must always be combined. There has been, as we have seen, a constant tendency to the elimination of good-will, to the substitution of an impersonal for a personal administration, to the materialization of the whole realm. Machines have displaced men, and an economic mechanism has crowded out humanity. The opportunity of friendship, of helpful and humane relations, is almost lost. It is this which we must somehow recover. The restoration of good-will is the one thing needful. The prob-

lem for every employer, for every employee, is to bring the two classes together as allies and friends. Antagonistic relations between them are not merely wicked, they are absurd. The men on either side who go about stirring up strife between them cannot know how ridiculous they appear. There is absolutely no such thing as human society in which good-will is not the organic law. And we must make haste to restore to our industrial society this vital element which we have insanely suffered to drop out of it.

This means that every employer must consider his employees, be they more or fewer, as the flock over which he is the shepherd; and must feel that a very large part of his business is the maintenance between himself and them of sympathetic relations.

It must mean that wherever this is possible he will live among them, and connect their homes with his by many ties of good neighborhood. It is of the utmost importance that between the families of employers and the families of employees there be a social bond of affection and sympathy. *Of all possible social settlements, this is the best, the settlement of the employers among the employees; with the clear recognition of the fact that people so closely connected in business ought to be friends.*

Thank God for the signs which I have al-

ready pointed out, that this truth is beginning to dawn upon the minds of the organizers of labor! Thank God for the promise of a day when this great principle of good-will shall be recognized as lying at the foundation of every business enterprise; when men shall feel that they are associated in these great industrial communities, as masters and workmen, not to be plunderers one of another, but to be helpers one of another; when the chief joy and pride of the employer shall be in the thrift and comfort and happiness of his work-people, his partners and associates in industry; when the loyal love and faith of the employed shall discern in the prosperity of the man who guides their industry the proof of their fidelity and the pledge of their welfare !

Some of you have been saying while you were listening: " This is no concern of ours: we are neither factory owners nor factory hands." But it does concern you. Every class in society is vitally interested in the welfare of every other class. We are all members of one body; you cannot go happily on to welfare and good fortune and leave your neighbors behind. You ought not to be willing to do it; but willing or unwilling, you cannot do it. If you will not suffer your fellow-men to share in your prosperity, you will be, in spite of yourselves, sharers in their adversity.

The working-classes are failing to get their fair proportion of the enormous gains of modern civilization. For some of this failure they are themselves responsible. There are evils in their condition that none but themselves can cure. They can improve their own lot in many ways, if they will. For other very important mitigations of their lot, their employers must be held responsible. There are many things which the organizers and captains of industry can do to open the door of hope to their working-people. In many of the most desirable changes the employers must take the initiative.

But there are some things that you and I, who are neither workingmen nor employers, can do, and must not fail to do. We can study this whole problem, and thus be able to help in forming an intelligent and humane public opinion concerning it; and it is public opinion, after all, that must be depended on to settle most of these questions.

One reform must come soon—that is, a reduction in the hours of labor. The marvellous improvements in machinery, and in the utilization of natural forces, will compel us to shorten the working day. The productive power of the machinery in use is said to be doubled by invention and discovery every seven years. In fourteen years it would be quadrupled; in twenty-eight years it would be multiplied

eightfold. I do not vouch for this estimate; but something like it is true. Now the population doubles only once in thirty years; so if this were true, the productive power of our machinery increases more than four times as fast as the population. It is manifest that the machinery cannot be kept running all the time; if it were, the production would be disproportionate, and stagnation would ensue. As a matter of fact, much of the existing machinery is idle a good part of the time. It can be demonstrated, I think, that all the goods now produced by machinery could be produced if the customary hours of daily labor were diminished by one or perhaps by two. And it would be vastly better for the health, the morals, and the thrift of the working-classes to work eight hours a day all the year round, than to work ten hours a day for ten months, and be idle for two months in the year.

How shall this change be brought about? It ought to come as the result of amicable agreements between masters and men; possibly, however, the greed of some employers will make it necessary to restrict by law the hours of labor. Therefore it is a question upon which we may be called to act, and on which we ought to have an intelligent opinion.

The question of child-labor is far more urgent. In ten years, we are told, child-labor

increased 58 per cent.—more than twice as fast as the population. These children are crowding their own fathers out of employment; strong men stand idle in the market-place because no man hath hired them, while their children are toiling in the mills and the factories. Thus the health of many of them is injured, the minds are dwarfed, their lives are blasted. And this is an evil that will not cure itself. It grows by what it feeds on. The economic laws will not remove it; they only aggravate it. Nothing in the world will cure it except the intervention of the conscience and good-will of the nation, by stringent laws, sternly enforced. We must shut young children out of these mills by law. There are men enough in this country to do the work of the country, to till the fields and to tend the machines; and they must do it. It may cost a little more; very good; it ought to cost a little more; that is exactly what we want—to put a little more money into the pockets of the working-classes. Then we must have compulsory education, thoroughly enforced, gathering the children that we have shut out of the factories into the schoolhouses and training them for usefulness.

The American people will not suffer that terrible oppression and degradation of the children of the poor which the economic forces

now at work are threatening. The strength of the nation is in the vigor and hopefulness of its working-classes; we are not, I think, such fools as to suffer them, in their very childhood, to be enfeebled and crippled for life before our very faces. And I trust that higher motives than these would hold us back from such a fatal policy. It stirs my blood, I own, to hear that in this rich country, this land that boasts so much of liberty, child-labor in the factories is increasing twice as fast as the population. Can you understand what that means? Listen:

“ Do you hear the children weeping, O my brothers  
Ere the sorrow comes with years?  
They are leaning their young heads against their mothers,  
And *that* cannot stop their tears.  
The young lambs are bleating in the meadows;  
The young birds are chirping in the nest;  
The young fawns are playing with the shadows;  
The young flowers are blowing toward the west;  
But the young, young children, O my brothers!  
They are weeping bitterly;  
They are weeping in the playtime of the others,  
In the country of the free.

“ They look up with their pale and sunken faces,  
And their look is dread to see;  
For they mind you of their angels in high places,  
With eyes turned on Deity.  
‘How long,’ they say, ‘how long, O cruel nation,  
Will you stand, to move the world on a child’s heart—  
Stifle down with a mailed heel its palpitant,  
And tread onward to your throne amid the mart?



Our blood splashes upward, O gold-heaper !  
And your purple shows your path ;  
But the child's sob in the silence curses deeper  
Than the strong man in his wrath.' "

We shall not suffer this curse, I know ; for Law, with flaming sword but kindly mien, will turn the little children of the poor from the portals of mill and mine and factory ; and Liberty, with gentle hand, will lead them into the ways of hope and happiness.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> While these pages have been passing through the press, the census reports have come to me showing a reduction during the last decade in the number of children employed in factories, the result, no doubt, of wise legislation and efficient factory inspection.





## II

### THE LABOR UNION

THE Labor Union must be ranked among the most conspicuous social phenomena of the present day. It has been greatly misunderstood, it has been bitterly denounced, it has been marked for extinction as one of the enemies of liberty; but it is still with us, and gives no signs of speedy exit. Political philosophers have proved that it is contrary to the principles of free government; political economists of a former generation have demonstrated that it is incapable of doing anything but mischief. Yet it continues to exist, and it seems evident that we must reckon with it as one of the persistent social facts of this generation.

It must be admitted at the outset that the methods employed by labor unions have sometimes been vicious and lawless, and that many things have been done by them for

which no justification can be offered; it may be contended that even now they adhere to some practices which are contrary to equity; yet it may also appear that these are abuses of the system, and not essential parts of it. It is even true of corporations, as we may hereafter discover, that their methods are not always above criticism. Yet most of us would say that the abuses of corporations are not irremediable; and that, under proper control, they may serve important purposes.

“Trades unions,” says Prof. Alfred Marshall, “are modern representatives of a series of movements that have exercised great influence over the growth of the people of England and indeed of all other countries of Western Europe. For the spirit which leads the members of a trade to combine together and concert action for their common benefit has been present throughout the whole period in which modern civilization has grown up.”<sup>1</sup>

The craftsmen of the Middle Ages formed themselves into guilds, for mutual assistance and protection.

“They were, indeed,” as Mr. Trant says, “the first friendly societies. These guilds gradually extended themselves beyond the limits of particular trades and ultimately became far more powerful

<sup>1</sup> *Economics of Industry*, p. 187.

than the municipal corporations of the present day. The notions of the members of the guilds were of a very exclusive nature in regard to the admission of members. No villeins were permitted to join them, and all freemen who were proposed had to be duly elected. The noblest of all the guilds of the Middle Ages was undoubtedly that of the Masons. This brotherhood arose from the circumstances in which the travelling builders of the Middle Ages found themselves placed. 'They were brought together from distant homes to be employed for a considerable time on such great works as our mediæval churches and cathedrals. Near the rising structure on which they were engaged it was necessary that they should provide for themselves a common shed or tabernacle.' This was the original Mason's lodge. Before all things it was necessary that masons should be 'free and accepted.' The entrance into this guild, as indeed into all others, was, in accordance with the spirit of the times, surrounded by mysterious rites and ceremonies, and all such societies had their peculiar lore and traditions."<sup>1</sup>

In this extract you have the history of the origin of a popular institution of the present day. But the guilds of that mediæval time were composed of both employers and employed. This you might infer from some of the traditional nomenclature of the Masonic

<sup>1</sup>*Trade Unions*, p. 9.

Order; for masters and apprentices in that order are members of the same lodge. In that time, however, the distinction between employers and employed was not so wide as it is to-day, for the masters and their men wrought together; ordinarily the master employed only two or three men, and they were on terms of social equality.

"Each craftsman," says Professor Marshall, "supplied himself with what little capital he wanted, and worked with his own hands. He was generally aided by an apprentice who would in due course become a craftsman, and often by his own family and perhaps one or two hired servants. Fashions changed slowly, new inventions were rare; his servants were hired by the year; it was to his interest to keep them employed even when there was not a good demand for his wares, so he did not wait for orders but worked steadily and made things for stock."<sup>1</sup>

Of such little groups of workers—masters, journeymen, and apprentices,—the trade guilds of the Middle Ages were made up. Those following the same calling in the same neighborhood bound themselves together for mutual protection and help; one of their aims was to promote honesty and excellence of work, to discourage and put down all shabby and slovenly workmanship; another of their aims was to

<sup>1</sup> *Economics of Industry*, p. 187.

promote brotherly kindness and to relieve the distress of the sick and the unfortunate. In one way, therefore, these ancient trade guilds were quite unlike the modern trades-unions, because they were composed of masters and men, not of men alone; and they recognized no division of interest between the employer and the employed.

Gradually, as wealth increased, the masters ceased to work with the men; industrial society was differentiated into the two great classes of capitalist employers and wage-laborers; the guilds of the Middle Ages became greatly disorganized, and the new industry called for a new combination of the forces of labor. When invention with its magic wand touched the great realm of industry, and machines that multiplied a hundred-fold the power of the human hand sprang into existence, one after another, and the combinations began to be made which resulted in the factory system, then the old simple relation of employer and employed was ended; instead of a household group of half a dozen—master, journeyman, and apprentices, all dwelling under the same roof, eating at the same table, working with the same tools, here was the capitalistic employer, the commander of an army of workmen, whose names, even, he could not know; who were no longer to him individual men,

only units of labor force; whose labor had come to be a commodity which he bought, like his cotton or his pig-iron, in the cheapest market, selling its product, of course, in the dearest.

Meantime he had come to believe—perhaps it was through some misapprehension of the teaching of the economists of his time—that no conscience and no care were needed by him in the application to the newly stated labor-problem of the principles of justice and compassion; that this matter would adjust itself; that the great natural law of supply and demand was omnipotent and beneficent—the very law of God; and that it would surely result in giving to the workman all that he ought to have, all that could by any possibility come to him; that all the employer needed to do, therefore, was to pursue his own interest keenly and relentlessly, and if everybody were not happy and prosperous, it would be no fault of his. It will be easily understood that this doctrine of *Laissez faire*, thus applied to the industrial realm, was most acceptable to the natural man, and that it found plenty of confessors and devotees. There was once a venerable and truly orthodox brother, you may remember, who said, in answer to a question, that he believed in the doctrine of total depravity, and tried to live up to it as well as

he could. It is a pretty easy doctrine to live up to, as some of us can testify. And when the substance of that doctrine is incorporated into what passes for an economic dogma, and men are instructed, or suppose themselves to be instructed, on the authority of science, that to give free play to their egoism is the surest way to promote universal welfare, we may expect to see multitudes eagerly confessing their faith in it, and living up to it with all good fidelity.

Thus the industrial revolution became also a social revolution; the relation between masters and men was changed fundamentally; indeed the whole realm of industrial exchanges was demoralized—using that word not in the French sense, but in the literal sense; the moral element was pretty largely eliminated from it; the duties of masters to men and of men to masters were ignored; and the law of competition and conflict was substituted for the law of brotherhood.

Besides this change in the methods and the regulative principles of the industrial realm, it seems to have been true that the first great manufacturers were, in a great many cases, hard men—greedy and unscrupulous. Perhaps this was to have been expected. At any rate, Professor Marshall tells us that they were in England, certainly,



“harsh and uncultivated men who made a bad use of their newly acquired power. They crowded their factories with apprentices, many of whom they took from the parish with a premium of £5 each. The factories were so unhealthy and the children worked so hard and for such long hours as to be seriously injured physically and morally. The workmen did not yet know how to protect themselves ; and at the beginning of the present century their means were straitened by the great rise in the prices of food and clothing that was caused by an extraordinary series of bad harvests, and by the taxes and restrictions arising from the great French war. A Parliamentary report of 1806 says that ‘the opulent clothiers make it a rule to have one third more men than they can employ, and thus these have to stand still part of the time.’”<sup>1</sup>

The degradation of labor that followed the industrial revolution brought about by the introduction of the factory system is one of the dark pages of the history of the nineteenth century. The redemption of labor from this bondage was wrought in part by the factory legislation, secured through the intervention of men like Lord Shaftesbury, and in part by the organization of the laborers themselves. For it was in these dark times that the first labor unions were formed. At first they were very

<sup>1</sup> *Economics of Industry*, p. 188.

much in the dark as to what they wanted to do. There were certain old laws, framed in the days of the Tudors, that they thought would help them, and they tried to get these laws enforced. These laws limited the number of looms each master weaver might have, ordered that the number of apprentices in a shop should not exceed by three the number of journeymen, and required that wages should be fixed periodically by justices of the peace. The first trades-unions undertook, by petitioning Parliament, to get these old laws enforced. They had some success at first, but, of course, such inquisitorial and crippling regulations could never be made to work; and they were forced to turn their energies in other directions. They found that they must stand together to demand shorter hours and better pay; that organized and consolidated capital must be met and held in check by the force of organized and disciplined labor.

Such was the origin of the modern labor unions. They were brought into existence by the greed of centralized capital, as a protection against its encroachments upon the very life of labor. The late Lord Bishop of Manchester was no reckless labor agitator, as everybody knows; he was a member of the aristocracy; his diocese was one that gave him ample opportunities of observation; he must be ac-

cepted as a competent witness, and these are his words: "I am no lover of trade unions, but they have been forced upon the working-classes by the inequitable use of the power of capital." The instinct of self-preservation was the force that drew them together. And if self-preservation is not the first law of nature, it is certainly one of the primordial laws whose validity it is vain to challenge.

Originating in this way, it is not to be wondered at that the unions were from the beginning turbulent and warlike. They were composed almost wholly of uneducated men, with small understanding of the laws of trade, with little power to see beyond the present hour; and they were embittered and angered by what seemed to them a conspiracy of the capitalistic classes to despoil and degrade them. The laws were all made by these classes, and they had no mercy on the laborer. The principle of the law seemed to be that labor had no rights that capital was bound to respect. These very combinations of theirs to protect themselves from degradation and destruction were unlawful; the courts decided, over and over, that all combinations or associations "in restraint of trade" were criminal—in plain words, that it was a crime for these working men to agree together that they would not work for less than a certain wage. Moreover, it was decided also

by the courts that associations with such purposes could hold no property, not even for benevolent or charitable purposes. The unions had already collected considerable funds, as benefit societies; under such rulings these funds could not be securely held; any rascally treasurer might decamp with the money, and the law said that there should be no remedy. They were treated as the enemies of society; the law made it no crime to steal from them. Of course, these decisions crippled all their charitable work, because they made their funds insecure.

It is true that the laws forbidding combinations in terms forbade employers as well as laborers to combine; but while the laws were rigidly enforced against the men, they were never invoked against the masters. Through all this period not a case is known in which combinations of employers, in restraint of trade,—and there were many such,—were molested by the law.

“To the ordinary politician,” says the latest historian, “a combination of employers and a combination of workmen seemed in no way comparable. The former was, at most, an industrial misdemeanor; the latter was, in all cases, a political crime. Under the shadow of the French Revolution the English governing classes regarded all associations of the common people with the utmost

alarm. In this general terror lest insubordination should develop into rebellion were merged both the capitalist's objection to high wages and the politician's dislike of democratic institutions. The combination laws, as Francis Place tells us, 'were considered as absolutely necessary to prevent ruinous extortions of workmen, which, if not restrained, would destroy the whole of the Trade, Manufactures, Commerce and Agriculture of the nation. . . .' This led to the conclusion that the workmen were the most unprincipled of mankind. Hence the continued ill-will, suspicion, and in almost every possible way, the bad conduct of workmen and their employers towards one another. So thoroughly was this false action entertained that whenever men were prosecuted to conviction for having combined to regulate their wages or their hours of working, however heavy the sentence passed on them was, and however rigorously it was inflicted, not the slightest feeling of compassion was manifested by anybody for the unfortunate sufferers. Justice was entirely out of the question; they could seldom obtain a hearing before a magistrate, never without impatience or insult; and never could they calculate on even an approximation to a rational conclusion."<sup>1</sup>

"In December, 1817, the Bolton constables, accidentally getting to know that ten delegates of the calico printers from the various districts of the kingdom were to meet on New Year's day, arranged

<sup>1</sup> *The History of Trade Unionism*, by Sidney and Beatrice Webb, pp. 64, 65.

to arrest the whole body and seize all their papers. The ten delegates suffered three months' imprisonment, although no dispute with their masters was in progress." "In 1786, the law of conspiracy had been strained to convict and punish with two years' imprisonment, the five London bookbinders who were leading a strike to reduce hours from twelve to eleven." "Two shoemakers of York were convicted in 1799 of 'combining to raise the price of their labor in making shoes and refusing to make shoes under a certain price.' In 1819 some calico engravers in Manchester protested against the undue multiplication of apprentices by their employers and enforced their protest by declining to work. For this conspiracy they were fined and imprisoned. In 1816 seven scissors grinders were sentenced to three months' imprisonment for belonging to what they called the 'Misfortune Club,' which paid out-of-work benefits and sought to maintain the customary rates." <sup>1</sup>

These are only transcriptions from the court records of a few out of innumerable cases in which, for no other offence than that of combining to reduce hours or raise wages, men were treated as felons.

Is it any wonder that men who were thus outlawed for trying to save themselves from destruction, should have turned upon their persecutors with wrath and ferocity; that they

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. ii.

should have become unreasonable, implacable, sometimes treacherous? The trades-union outrages that broke forth about this time,—are they altogether inexplicable? The law that makes it a crime for workmen to combine for mutual assistance and protection will be sure to make animals of them in many other ways. They will feel that the law is their enemy; they will violate it with no compunction; all their notions of right and wrong will become sadly confused. So it was with the trades-unions in this turbulent period, which lasted well through the middle of the century. Charles Reade gives you a lurid account of some of their later doings in *Put Yourself in His Place*. But this, by the way, is the very thing that the brilliant writer did not quite succeed in doing. He was not able to put himself in the place of the working men. He did not fully comprehend the extent of the provocations to which the Sheffield outrages were the fierce response.

Nevertheless, it is useless to try to palliate these outrages. They were reasonless, vindictive, sometimes barbarous.

“Masters and workmen who refused or failed to comply with their rules,” says Mr. William Saunders, “were subjected to treatment of the most diabolical character. Their cattle were hamstrung, or otherwise mutilated, their ricks set on fire. They

were shot at, and in one instance a master was killed by an air gun fired into a crowded room. Gunpowder was usually employed in the case of obnoxious workmen. Canisters were thrown down chimneys; bottles filled with the explosive, to which lighted fuses were attached, were thrown through windows of the workmen's dwelling-houses, thus exposing women and children to its terrible effects. It was a common practice to place gunpowder in grinding troughs, which exploded as soon as work was commenced."<sup>1</sup>

These outrages aroused the British public, and a Parliamentary Commission in 1867, for the second time, investigated the whole subject. The result was a considerable reaction of public opinion in favor of the trades-unions. It was found that out of sixty of these organizations then in existence, only twelve had been implicated in these practices; and that of these the greater proportion of the members had no knowledge of the lawlessness. They were the deeds of a set of desperate men who had attached themselves to the unions, not the fruit of any concerted purpose of the great body of the working men. This, as I believe, has always been the case. And the result of the investigation was the passage, in 1871, of a law making these associations legal, so that the members were no longer liable to prosecu-

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Trant, p. 40.



tion for conspiracy; so that their funds are protected as fully as those of the great companies and corporations. The trades-unions of England are now national institutions, defended and fostered by the laws of the land. And since the brand of outlawry has been removed, and the right of the workmen to combine has been guaranteed, a great change has taken place in their methods of administration; the old forms of violence are almost wholly abandoned; the law is their friend, and they are learning to honor and uphold it.

I have been thus particular to give a pretty full account of the origin of the labor unions in England, because England is the country of their origin, because the unions in our own country are copied from English models, and because many of the traditions and tendencies of these organizations can be understood only by those who have some knowledge of their history.

Briefly, now, what are the objects which the labor union seeks to secure? These four are, perhaps, chief among them:

1. They are benefit societies. They do the same kind of work that is done by the Odd-Fellows, the Knights of Pythias, and other benevolent organizations. The members pay a certain sum weekly, and are entitled to receive, when sick or disabled or out of work,

certain weekly relief. In England this is the most important function of the trades-union. The working men with whom I have talked in my visits to England put the emphasis on this feature. It was for this that they seemed chiefly to value the union. Its relation to the question of wages they did not appear to think so much about. In the report of six of the largest of the English unions, running through a considerable term of years, I find that while they have paid for special strike benefits about \$1,625,000, they have paid on general benefits \$23,300,000—more than fourteen dollars for general benefits to one dollar for the support of strikers. This feature of their work is certainly one of great value. Such benefit funds can be more safely and wisely administered by the workmen of a single trade, who are closely associated and well acquainted, than by persons less firmly allied in their interests.

2. The trades-unions also endeavor to secure, to some extent, improved conditions of health, comfort, and safety for their work. It is very true that in the early days, when the bitter conflicts between the unions and the masters were in progress, the workmen themselves resisted, with melancholy fatuity, the benevolent efforts of some employers to improve the sanitary conditions of the mills and factories. The fact was that they were simply mad;

reason had departed from them; their hostility to their employer had become a kind of insanity; they fought him at every turn, and seemed bound to believe that every act which he performed was dictated by enmity to them. But they have recovered from that craze long ago; and they are now not only ready to accept such overtures, but to look out for their own health and comfort and safety. That this is a legitimate object nobody will deny.

3. The educational value of these unions is not to be underrated. They are all free parliaments, and the discipline of debate is very stimulating. One must regret, indeed, that partial views and one-sided theories are quite too apt to gain currency—perhaps no more so than in Boards of Trade and clubs of professional men. One often hears views put forward with great clearness and vigor which are just about half-true, and which provoke the admonition of the American humorist: “Young man, it would be better for you not to know so much than to know so many things that aint so.” One often feels the force of Mr. Bosanquet’s keen saying, that the error of the man who thinks he knows it all is more dangerous than the ignorance of the man who knows nothing. Yet my own observation convinces me that after all these deductions are made, the intellectual gains of the working men

through these associations are not insignificant. I had something to do with bringing together for conference a few years ago quite a number of representative employers and representative labor-leaders; and I am bound to say that in their comprehension of the social questions before them, in their knowledge of what has been said and written about them, and in their ability to state their opinions with clearness and force, the working men were not at all inferior to their employers.

4. The one purpose, however, which is commonly emphasized in connection with the work of the labor unions, is the increase of wages and the shortening of the hours of labor. The common notion makes this the main reason of their existence; it is conceived that they associate chiefly for the purpose of securing, in the distribution of wealth, a larger share for the laborer. Have they accomplished this?

On this question there has been a great deal of economic discussion, and the disputants have not yet come to entire agreement. It is evident that wages have increased considerably in the trades thus organized, since their organization. Mr. John Burnett testifies:

“The condition of the workers never was improved until after the era of Trade-Unions; and all their improvement, whether in wages or better conditions of working, has gone on step by step

with the extension and adoption of Trade-Union principles."

Still, it is answered that this improvement may have been the result of other causes; that it is *post hoc*, not *propter hoc*. In some trades that are not organized, in domestic service, for example, the rate of wages has increased quite as rapidly as in the organized trades. Housemaids have no union; on the contrary, there is something very like a combination among their mistresses; for there is a sentiment which decidedly discourages the mistress from offering higher wages to her neighbor's maid. In spite of this, the wages of housemaids have steadily risen. It is also true, I think, that the salaries of teachers and professional men have increased, perhaps quite as much, without the aid of these combinations.

Nevertheless, I am persuaded that the classes who render professional and personal services are on a basis somewhat different from that of the mechanical wage-workers, and that it is unfair to reason from the one class to the other. And I am quite ready to admit that the wages of labor have been and may be to some extent increased by such combinations. I take the judgment of the soundest political economists, like Professors Marshall and Jevons, that such a result is possible. There is no room to enter here into the vast question

of strikes further than to say that, on the lowest basis of judgment, they are a very costly luxury for working men, and must be indulged in sparingly. A successful strike, as some one has said, like a successful lawsuit, is generally only a little less expensive than an unsuccessful one.

A recent bulletin of the National Department of Labor shows that between the beginning of 1881 and the middle of 1894 strikes and lock-outs occurred in this country involving 75,234 establishments, by which 4,081,096 persons were thrown out of employment, with a wage loss to employees of \$190,493,382,—and a loss to the firms employing them of \$94,825,837,—or a total loss to industry of \$285,319,219. It is a very large sacrifice; what a lessening of human comfort and well-being it involves!

These statistics show that so far as the *strikes* were concerned the employees were successful or partly successful in nearly 56 per cent. of the struggle,—and wholly unsuccessful in a little more than 44 per cent.; while in the lock-outs the employers were wholly or partly successful in a little more than fifty per cent., and in about 48 per cent. were unsuccessful; the results in a little more than two per cent. of the cases not being known. My belief is that, as a rule, the side that ought to win does

win; and if this is true, the workmen have been right in these struggles oftener than the employers.

The success of a strike cannot, however, be wholly determined by comparing the wages lost during the stoppage of work with the gains of the months succeeding. As Professor Marshall says:

“The unionists maintain that their expenditure is prudent because it makes employers feel that they cannot lower wages or harass their men wantonly without a risk of suffering for it. The function of an army is not to make war but to preserve a satisfactory peace.”<sup>1</sup>

This is precisely the function of the trades-union. It is the standing army of labor, maintained for purposes of defense. And it is just as necessary for the working men to maintain these organizations as it is for a nation, living in the midst of predatory tribes, to maintain an army and fortifications for the protection of its frontiers.

So long as the present organization of industry continues, the right of working men to combine must be frankly and fully conceded. In view of the stupendous combinations of capital, the refusal to permit the combination of laborers is a grotesque injustice. In Eng-

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 193.

land this question is practically settled; few, if any, employers of intelligence now question the legitimacy and usefulness of labor unions. In this country their right to exist is still sometimes challenged. A large number of the most bitter and destructive conflicts between labor and capital have been fought upon this issue. In every such conflict my sympathies are wholly with the working men. The attempt to deprive them of the right to stand together for their own defense is one that they ought to resist by all lawful means, and they ought to know that all men who hate oppression are on their side. It is little to say that they ought to win in this struggle; they will win, and they must win. There never can be honorable and enduring peace between these classes until the right of the workmen to combine for their own protection is cordially and unreservedly conceded by their employers.

That the unions are able, by careful organization, and with the strike as a weapon to which they may at any time resort, to effect sometimes an increase of wages, and often to prevent a reduction of wages, seems to me evident. Yet the positive gain can never be very great for one section of workers, without inflicting a loss upon some other section. If the building trades, for example, secure an advance in wages, this makes houses cost more;



this makes rents dearer; and the great number of working men who rent houses are obliged to pay tribute for the enrichment of the building trades. Of course it does not all come out of the pockets of the other working men; some of it comes out of the pockets of the capitalists and the professional classes; but a good share of it falls upon the laboring classes.

"Much would be gained," says Professor Marshall, "if all workmen knew that . . . since about half of all things that are produced are bought by working men, working men as a body have to bear about half the loss that arises from any check to production; and that, though one trade may sometimes gain a higher price for what work it does by diminishing production, yet one-half of this increase in price has generally to be borne by other members of the working-classes."<sup>1</sup>

Two or three criticisms upon the general policy of the trades-unions deserve our attention.

The first concerns their opposition to prison labor. With respect to this their view is narrow and unsocial; and the intelligent men among them ought to cultivate a better sentiment. Any one who sees, what may be seen any day in Columbus, six or seven hundred men sitting all day in the idle house, con-

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 212.

demned to indolence and mental and moral stagnation, can have but little patience with this petty policy. The entire prison product would amount to not more than one fifth of one per cent. of the total production; the reduction of wages due to it, if evenly distributed, would amount, in the case of a man receiving two dollars a day, to two fifths of a cent. per diem; and I think that the working men of this country can risk this financial loss rather than permit the horrible social injury which must result from keeping thousands of men confined for years in absolute idleness. Every such man, when discharged from confinement, is certain to be far more dangerous to society than when he was sent to prison.

Another accusation against the trades-unions concerns their policy with regard to the limitation of apprenticeships. This charge, also, has some foundation. The old unions were disposed to enforce strict rules; and many trades were virtually closed to all except the sons of members, and room was found for very few of these. At present, however, I think that these restrictions have but little force. Mr. Bemis, who has carefully investigated the whole subject, reports that out of forty-eight unions reporting to him recently, twenty-eight had no restrictions on apprenticeship, and that in most cases where such limitations are en-

forced, the quota of apprentices allowed by the rules was not full, showing that the rules were not to blame for the falling off in the number. The truth is that the introduction of machinery and the great subdivision of labor have shattered most of the trades into fragments, so that there are comparatively few handicrafts in which apprenticeship is possible.

The policy of closing the trade against all comers has also been sometimes adopted by the unions. Even in the case of the London Dockers, who succeeded, in 1889, by the powerful aid of public opinion, in forming a compact organization of laborers unskilled and hitherto unorganized, we find this exclusive policy at work; so that only a few months after the strike, they adopted resolutions declaring that their union had enough men to do all the work of the docks, and that no more would be admitted. I have heard of churches announcing that their membership was full; but I would rather not believe that trade-unions could adopt this policy. And, indeed, I do not think that it prevails to any great extent. As a rule, I believe that the unions are willing to admit to membership all good and reputable workmen.

The most serious accusation relates to their treatment of non-unionists. The fact that they often refuse to work with men who do

not belong to the union, and that they are sometimes disposed to use violence in time of strikes toward those who are ready to take the places which they have vacated, is one that is urged, with much force, against the unions. So far as violence is concerned, I am ready to say with all emphasis, that it is not to be tolerated under any circumstances. I believe that it is always the argument of weakness. I believe that the workmen can carry their point without it, whenever they are in the right, and that when they resort to it they are always the losers. Yet I sympathize with them in their indignation against those who will not unite with them in their lawful and peaceful attempts to secure better conditions. The sober words of Professor Bascom set this vexed matter in the true light:

“In the best organized trades, hardly half the workmen in a given occupation belong to them. A certain class of self-reliant, independent workmen prefer to remain aloof. For them the union means a sacrifice. A large number of careless and indifferent workmen fail to unite. In good times they do not feel the need of aid ; in bad times the unions are unwilling to receive them. It is impossible that hostility should not spring up between union and non-union men. Union men always in their own eyes, and often in fact, are contending for the common cause ; non-union men not only

do not contribute to this effort, they often make it feeble by a blind competition. When a strike is in progress attended with much suffering, and non-union workmen accept the rejected service, they are taking labor they have not themselves secured, and by doing so are aiding to bring about a reduction of wages. Human life, in all its trying experiences, hardly offers another case more provocative of bitter feelings. The case is one in which the plea of industrial liberty is brought in a deceptive way against social progress. The hostility is like that which, in our own Revolution, was felt against those who would not take part in it. The individual, in a general movement for the public welfare, must concede something of his own personal liberty. A constraining, organic force gets hold of him, and he must respond.”<sup>1</sup>

I am sure that all large-minded men can feel the force of this statement. Yet it must be observed that this logic only holds good so long as the industrial world remains on what is practically a war basis—so long as there is a sharp discrimination and conflict of interests between labor and capital. It is not exactly “a general movement for the public welfare,” that the strike proposes; it is a sectional movement, for the welfare of a portion of society, in conflict with another portion. This is what gives the “scab” his footing. In social war-

<sup>1</sup> *Social Theory*, p. 248.

fare there are generally rights to be maintained on both sides. And it is precisely because these individual strifes are often waged, on the part of the unions, with slight regard for the welfare of society at large, that society at large is inclined to take the part of the scab.

The one lesson that the people of the trades-unions need to learn, is the solidarity of human interests. I think that they are learning it, but they need to comprehend it more clearly. The world, as we often say, is growing very small. The wonderful improvements in transportation and communication are bringing the ends of the earth together. The organization of industry and trade is becoming so extensive and so complicated, that every man's interests are bound up with the interests of every other man; we are drawn into closer and closer neighborhood, and it begins to be evident that no man liveth to himself. It is necessary, then, that we all learn to guide our conduct by social aims. We must think, continually, not only of how our action will affect our individual interests, and the interests of those nearest us, but also how it will affect the general welfare.

The Pharisee who went up into the temple to pray thought only of himself—or thought of his neighbors only to despise them. "Lord," he cried, "I thank Thee that I am not as other

men are.” He divided the whole world into two classes; he was one class all by himself; the rest of mankind made up the other class. He was absolutely selfish, incorrigibly egotistic, perfectly self-centred, even in his prayers. This is the worst possible type of man. It does not take but one such man to make a hell. “Myself am hell,” he might truthfully declare. And two or three such can kindle a flame of discord that is hotter than any pit of burning brimstone.

Another type of man, not so bad as the Pharisee, but still far below the best, is the one who is alleged to have offered that other historic prayer:

“God bless me and my wife,  
My son John and his wife,  
Us four and no more.”

There are a good many specimens of this type. They are pretty faithful to their own kith and kin; they look out for the interests of their own immediate households, but they have no love for anything beyond the four walls of their own homes. They are not worse than infidels, because they do care for their own. But we can easily see that this type is defective. Man was made for wider sympathies and broader relations.

Still another type is that of the good clansman. He embraces within the arms of his

outreaching affection not merely his family but his tribe. To that particular group of men with whom he is closely associated—the men of his guild or his trade—he is loyal, but beyond this group he has no interests and feels no obligations. For all the members of this small class he is willing to think and work and deny himself; but the frontiers of this class are the boundaries, for him, of affection and responsibility. And while this man is a great deal better than either of the others, we may be able to see that he is still inferior to the best. His morality is substantially the same kind of morality that was current among the old heathen tribes. That was what the philosophers call an ethnic morality. The individual who belonged to one of these ancient peoples felt that he owed certain duties to persons of his own nationality, but none to those of other nationalities. With no compunction whatever he would fall upon any stray foreigner that might chance to cross his path, strip him of his property and kill him or enslave him, if he could. Nor did he have the slightest feeling that there was anything wrong in this. Right and wrong were words wholly inapplicable to his relation with foreigners. A Jew did not feel that it was wrong to tell a lie to a Philistine or a Canaanite, or to steal his sheep or to poison his well.



Of course it is easy to see that such a morality as this was very imperfect; that it justified many evil deeds; that it was the foundation of a poor and narrow species of character; that it made any general peace wholly impossible among the nations.

It was necessary, in order that the character of man might be properly developed, and the welfare of the race secured, that a wholly different basis should be given to the laws of conduct. Morality must be taken off these ethnic or tribal foundations and placed upon the foundation of universal love. It was necessary that men should learn that the whole human race is one brotherhood; that every man is a child of God; that God has made of one blood all the nations of the earth to live upon the face of the earth; that the obligations of love and friendship and truth and justice are not bounded by the national frontiers, but reach wherever man is found; that I am to love my neighbor as myself, and that my neighbor is every human being whom I can succor or defend from wrong, whom I can uplift or comfort or bless. And this was precisely what Jesus Christ sought to do—or one of the things, the great thing, that he came to do; he came to make morality no longer ethnic, tribal, national, but universal; to put the prayer "Our Father" into the mouth of every human be-

ing; and thus to enforce the truth of universal human brotherhood.

And yet it is hard to get men to realize this truth, and live up to it. We keep going back to the old ethnic morality; we are constantly inclined to think that our love and duty are due only to those who belong to our clan, our set, our sect, our trade; that the rest are nothing to us, and must look out for themselves. And something like this has often been the trouble with the labor unions. They are organized to look sharply after the interests of their own class, and they have been quite too much inclined to be oblivious of the happiness of others.

Mr. Trant, one of the historians of the trades-unions, says that "a remarkable feature in trades unionism is its thorough unselfishness. The various societies are not opposed to each other; indeed they help one another." Mr. Trant gives examples of the truth of his statement; but unfortunately there are a good many instances to be quoted in disproof of it. The various societies do not always help one another. The coal-miners and the iron-workers, for example, have often been bitterly opposed to each other, because the coal-miners, by their strikes, have made coal so dear that the furnaces had to stop. Feuds of this nature have sometimes been very serious; and one

chief object of Trades-Councils—or Confederations of Trades-Unions—is, as Mr. Howell says,

“to prevent a union from incurring the odium of a strike through some misunderstanding or petty jealousy between two sections of one trade which, in the end, if it had taken place, would not only have injured both parties to the dispute, but would also have been ruinous to the employer, although he was in no way concerned in the cause of the quarrel.”

Nevertheless it is true that different classes of workmen do generally support one another. The interests of the laboring class, in general, they consider and care for. The formation of Trade Congresses and Federations, in which they can meet and discuss the condition of *all* the wage-workers, indicates a broadening of their sympathies. He is a larger and nobler specimen of manhood whose good-will reaches forth to all his fellow-toilers than is he who cares only for the interests of his own particular trade. Yet this is but a partial view of human obligation. There are a good many of us who are not wage-workers, who feel that we have some right to be considered and cared for by our brother-toilers. The organizers of labor, the merchants, the thinkers, the students, the inventors, the healers of disease, the teach-

ers, the artists, the singers, the great company of those whose work is not mechanical but mental, who are striving to add something to the world's store of truth or beauty, who are aiding the laborers by exchanging their commodities, and by rendering them various services—we feel that we are not altogether superfluous in this world, and that our interests also ought to be considered. So long as man does not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, so long he will have other needs than those of food and clothing; and those who minister to these higher needs will surely have a function to perform. Producers they are, as truly as any of the rest, though their products may not be measurable by yardsticks or ponderable with steelyards. I suppose that it is evident to everybody that the whole of mankind cannot be manual laborers or wage-workers; indeed, it seems to be the policy of the unions to limit the growth of these classes as much as possible. Those of us, then, who are outside the unions and are not wanted inside, must have some place in the commonwealth. Some of us know that we want to be just as serviceable as we can to all our fellow-men—to those of every class and calling. We feel that we owe duties to all of them; that the welfare of all our neighbors is and ought to be dear to us. We have learned

to say " Our Father," and to include in that word " our " all sorts and conditions of men. We would like to help them all, if we could; we do not leave any of them out in our thoughts and plans for humanity. And it seems to us that they ought to think of us too; that they ought not to leave us out, in their thinking and their planning; that the social sympathies of every man ought to be broad enough to include the welfare of all his fellow-men, especially of all those who live in the same community, and whose interests, in numberless ways, are affected by his conduct.

What word was this that I just uttered? The Community? Yes, it is a community in which every one of us lives; and the supreme social obligation of every man is not to the social set of which he is a member or the craft with which he works, but to the community that shares with him the blessings of order and freedom and stores for him the gains of Christian civilization.

Now the main fault I have to find with the labor unions is that they have not always cultivated so much as they ought to have done, this larger sense of common interests and obligations, without which a man can neither be a good citizen nor a good Christian. My criticism of them is that they have often tended to promote a narrow and clannish spirit. I do

not know that they are any worse, in this respect, than some of the religious sects; if they are as bad, they are certainly bad enough and ought to reform. For the sectarianism of social classes is just as evil and mischievous a thing as the sectarianism of religious organizations; both are forms of anti-Christ; both are foes to peace and barriers to progress.

As means for the defense of labor against the encroachments of consolidated and dehumanized masses of capital the labor unions are a necessity; but if through them the wage-workers are segregated from the rest of the community, and made mere partizans of their own interests, their influence will be injurious. And as one who has, for many years, and before many voices were lifted up in the pulpit in their defense, maintained the right of the wage-workers to combine for their own protection, I speak this friendly warning, that they beware of narrowness and clannishness; and this earnest admonition, that they cultivate the feeling of a common interest with all their fellow-men. And I am bound to say that the growth of this sentiment among them is perceptible and encouraging. The signs of a broader and more catholic purpose are everywhere visible. One of these signs is the readiness of the unions to submit trade disputes to arbitration. It is only the truth to say that

they have generally been much more willing than the employers to adopt this rational measure; and that they have generally been faithful in abiding by the settlement thus secured. And I heartily endorse those words of Mr. Burnett, the Secretary of the most powerful of the English trades-unions:

“The extension of boards of conciliation and arbitration, and of joint committees of masters and men, seems to me to be gradually leading up to a modern type of the ancient guild. The board of green cloth is becoming more and more the scene of the councils of conflicting interests which are felt to be identical, and in the spirit of the old guilds decisions are arrived at and acted upon which are for the good of the trade at large. The cultivation and development of the modern guild on these lines should be a task reciprocally undertaken by unions of masters and men.”<sup>1</sup>

That is the true trades-union—the union of employers and employed—of guiding brains and willing hands—all watchful of each other’s interests, seeking each other’s welfare, working together for the common good.

<sup>1</sup> *The Claims of Labor*, p. 36.





### III

#### THE CORPORATION.

THE corporation is closely connected with the political, the industrial, the educational, and the religious interests of the people: its origin is political; it is a creature of legislation; and its work reaches out into the realms of production, of commerce and exchange, of learning, of philanthropy, of religion. Many of our great manufactories are conducted by corporations; all our railroad companies are corporations; so are our banks, our private charitable institutions, most of our colleges, and all of our churches. The question of the nature, the power, the limitations, of corporations thus at once appears to be a question of the most vital and far-reaching importance. Our material prosperity may be said to be almost wholly in the keeping of these institutions; our intellectual development is largely dependent upon them, and it is easy to see



that the standards of public morality must be powerfully affected, for good or ill, by their transactions.

What is a corporation ?

“ A corporation,” says Judge Cooley, “ is a body consisting of one or more natural persons, *empowered by law to act as an individual*, and continued by a succession of members. If it consist of but one member at a time it is a corporation sole, if of two or more it is a corporation aggregate. Bishops, parsons, and vicars of the Church of England are corporations sole, but in the United States few if any exist.”<sup>1</sup>

The King of England is also a corporation sole; the kingly powers and prerogatives which he assumes at his coronation are regarded as immortal; they do not die when the king dies; his successor is king as soon as the breath has left his body. “ The king is dead! long live the king.” The English parson, in possession of the living of a parish, is also a corporation sole. The tithes are due to the *office* of the parson,—to the impersonal entity which is still holding the place, after the parson dies, and before his successor is inducted. These legal fictions, as Judge Cooley says, are not familiar to Americans; we know nothing of the existence of such an artificial person as the corpora-

<sup>1</sup> Lalor's *Cyclopedia*, i., 664.

tion sole. The corporation aggregate is, however, an everyday acquaintance; we can scarcely take a step in life that we do not encounter him; he is the servant of our convenience, the minister to our wants, the purveyor of our pleasures; and if, sometimes, his hand is laid heavily upon us, the pressure is so slow and gradual that we are scarcely aware of the source from which it comes.

Corporations are public or private. The government of a village or a city is a public corporation. All citizens who are voters are members of these corporations; the officers chosen by them are officers of the corporation. A manufacturing company like the Illinois Steel Company, or the Pacific Mills at Lawrence, is a private corporation. The holders of the stock are members of the corporation. If you sell your share of stock to me, you cease to be a member by that act, and I become a member. The voting in such corporations is by shares. The holder of a hundred shares has a hundred votes; the holder of ten shares, ten votes.

There is also a class of *quasi*-public corporations, among which are national banks and railway companies. The fact that national banks are subject to the constant inspection and surveillance of the government, and that all their operations are carefully regulated by

law, clearly indicates their public character. Still more evident should it be that railroads are not, though they often assume that they are, private corporations. They are public highways, as truly subject to the power of the state as are our public roads and our city streets.

These artificial persons, called corporations, created by the state for certain purposes, are very curious entities. There is nothing exactly like them in the heavens above nor on the earth beneath. It takes not a little subtlety to define their nature and comprehend their powers.

“We are not likely,” says Mr. Edward Isham, “to exaggerate in our conception of the distinctive personality of these mythical beings who are nevertheless actual members of the community. They may perform nearly all the acts that natural persons may, but these are in no sense the acts of their various members. They act by their respective names and corporate seals, not by the persons who compose them. In the language of Lord Coke, ‘a corporation is invisible, immortal, has no soul, neither is it subject to the imbecilities or death of the natural body.’ These words have attracted animadversion, but they are substantially accurate. If all the members are collected, one does not see the corporation. It may be sued, but if every member appear the corporation has not

answered the writ. It may own property, real and personal ; but the members will have no property nor any right in any part of it. It may owe debts of which the members owe nothing. . . . It is a citizen of the state by whose sovereignty it is created, and its action is determined by the mere majority of its members. All the members, however, may change, but it remains unchanged. They may succeed one another indefinitely ; so that they may die, but the corporation remains immortal.”<sup>1</sup>

This impersonal person, this unmoral agent, this fictitious immortal is, you may safely conclude, a creature that will bear studying, and watching. When such a prodigy is let loose in society there will be consequences, depend upon it ! Do you think that you could foretell exactly what it would do ?

If you study its natural history inductively, by trying to observe and record its habitat and its habits, you will come upon some very curious and interesting facts. You will find, to begin with, as I have already suggested, that it has been a very useful creature. Under domestication and proper control it has been taught to bear many of the burdens of society, and to guard its highest interests. In the sphere of education, for example, what could we have done without this creature of law, the corporation ? For the maintenance of great

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 670.

institutions of learning vast sums of money must be collected, land procured, and held by firm title, buildings erected, funds endowed; and there are thus great accumulations of property to be held and administered from generation to generation. What other device for the custody and care of these great and permanent institutions could be so simple and effective as that of the corporation? The law establishing the corporation sometimes names the trustees who shall hold the property, always prescribes the general use to which it shall be put, and empowers the trustees to fill vacancies in their own number. This is an instance of what is called a close corporation; and under organizations of this kind the greater part of the educational and philanthropic work of this country has been done. The necessity of some such legal machinery as this for the administration of great schools and great charities, and the perpetuation of institutions of learning and benevolence, is sufficiently obvious.

The indebtedness of the church to this device is equally great. The church must have property; its property must be placed in some custody; provision must be made for transmitting it from one generation to another; and it would be difficult to hit upon any other way of securing it than that of incorporating the

church (or the ecclesiastical society associated with it), and committing the property and the financial affairs of the church to the trustees of this corporation.

The industrial, the commercial, and the financial interests of our people are still more signally indebted to this contrivance. When the invention of machinery and the division of labor made great combinations necessary, and summoned into existence the large system of industry, the corporation immediately appeared as the minister of these great functions. Few single men could be found whose accumulations of capital were vast enough to build and stock a great factory; still fewer to construct and equip a railroad; but the savings of many, combined, could be effectually used for such vast purposes. In the eloquent words of Mr. Isham:

“The changed conditions of society found these mythical beings ready to spring into existence, with power and endurance equal to any requirement. They have enormously multiplied in the past few years. Unincumbered by the infirmities of natural persons, for them no aggregation of capital or of physical force is too great, nor any enterprise too vast or long enduring. Their administrative powers may expand from such as conduct the smallest enterprises to such as equal or surpass those of political governments; so that it has come about that

the whole business of transportation has passed into the hands of corporations. The business of transportation includes all corporations engaged in the storage and transfer of freight, the carriage of persons, of parcels, of messages, and everything that relates to the intercommunication which is productive of commerce, and it is easy to see that their relations to society are of the most intimate and involved character, and their stupendous powers are exercised directly upon the ratio of the resources to the subsistence, not of individuals here and there but of every person in every community. These are new conditions in human life. No such gigantic social power has ever existed in the world before. The conditions are not temporary. They are permanent and in process of development, and society must adjust itself to them.”<sup>1</sup>

If these words of a sober and clear-headed lawyer are true words, then it behooves every man to give due heed to the tremendous problem thrust upon our nation by the existence of these mighty agencies. That these great combinations of capital and these vast organizations of power are necessary to the production of comfort and the ministry of convenience in these days is obvious enough; that they have resulted in increasing, almost miraculously, the material wealth of our people, and in greatly extending knowledge and the possibilities of

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 671.

welfare is not to be denied. We can never again dispense with them, until we agree to dispense with private capital altogether, and adopt the socialistic programme, and that day, most of us are prone to think, is yet a long way off. And yet it is plain enough that with all these stupendous powers for good which they embody, there are also enormous capabilities of evil. When the purpose of a corporation is philanthropic or religious, its working is almost uniformly beneficent. But when the purpose is gain, the demon of avarice is let loose, and it must be owned that the safeguards of virtue and the restraints of lawlessness which act effectually as checks upon the conduct of individuals, are much less efficient in the case of corporations. It must be evident enough to any one that such a creature as a corporation has been described to be may do a great many lawless and mischievous things. The corporation has no soul. That is to say it has no conscience. That is the legal theory, and corporations, it must be admitted, generally live up to this theory. Whether it is the true theory we shall inquire by and by; but it is, for the most part, the working theory. If wrong is done in its name, the responsibility rests on no one in particular. At any rate it is perfectly easy for the individual members to hide themselves behind the



corporation. "A body of men," says Herbert Spencer, "will commit as a joint act that which every individual of them would shrink from did he feel himself personally responsible." I am constrained to believe that the existence of industrial corporations has thus had a very deleterious influence upon public morals. Men are constantly performing acts, or consenting to acts, as members of corporations, which they would not do or allow if they stood alone. Thus their moral perceptions are dulled, and their moral stamina weakened. This schooling in corporation morality prepares them for doubtful practices in individual transactions. Think of the rascally deeds with which most intelligent men are perfectly familiar, that have been done by corporations, under the cover of law! Think of the more startling fact that they have lost in this way but little social credit! These things become so common that the consciences not only of those who perform them but of those who witness them are somewhat blurred: the whole community suffers moral injury by familiarity with such dishonesties.

And there is still another way, as Mr. Spencer points out, in which corporations become the occasions, if not the authors of immorality. Individuals seem to have less conscience in dealing with corporations than with other in-

dividuals. A man will cheat a railroad company, if he can, when he would not cheat his neighbor. He can imagine the pain and indignation that his neighbor would feel on being cheated, and his realization of this restrains him; he cannot imagine anything of the kind in the case of a corporation, and therefore he cheats it with much less compunction. Of course this is not the fault of the corporation, it is the fault of the individual; but it is the natural consequence of introducing into society these unmoral entities with which moral beings are brought into moral relations. There can be no moral reciprocity between a man and a corporation,—between a being with a conscience and a being without a conscience. Yet transactions which involve moral principles are constantly taking place between men and corporations. Clearly the man is at a great disadvantage. He is not likely to get from the corporation what he is justly entitled to, and he is not inclined to render to the corporation all that it is justly entitled to. The whole relation is abnormal, and therefore morally injurious. Men are morally damaged continually by their contact with corporations—those who are within the corporations by the weakening of responsibility; those who are without, by the lack of that reciprocal action of conscience upon conscience by which morality is vitalized.

Not only by the blur of conscience, but also by the impediment which they put in the way of equal freedom, the corporations are seriously affecting social morality. When it is said in the Declaration of Independence that all men are created equal, a very serious error is apt to be conveyed. It seems to signify an equality of natural powers, and that does not exist. Great inequalities of natural powers appear among men. From this natural inequality will inevitably result great inequalities of condition, and no law can prevent it. Some men are stronger than others and will get a larger portion of the good things of this world. So long as competition is the law of commerce, this must be so. There is one and only one adequate remedy for this, and that is to fill the strong with the spirit of Christ, so that they shall use their strength not altogether in their own aggrandizement, but also in the service of the weak. So long, however, as self-love is the ruling motive in the conduct of men, so long there will be more or less of oppression of the weak by the strong ; the natural law that " to him that hath shall be given " will operate to increase the accumulations of the rich and to deplete the small earnings of the poor. At best this is a grievous condition ; it requires a constant exertion of the moral forces of the community to prevent

it from operating with crushing weight. All this is true when individuals compete only with individuals; when the law of competition has its perfect work in existing society; when those natural inequalities which exist among natural persons furnish the field for competition. But the case is greatly aggravated when these tremendous artificial persons known as corporations are introduced into the field. The greatest inequality of power between one man and another is as nothing compared with the inequality between this humblest man and the gigantic corporation. And this is an equality that is not natural; an equality for which the Creator is not responsible; an inequality which we have created by law, for the promotion of the material welfare of the community. If the natural inequalities among men, when unchecked by conscience, often bear with crushing effect upon the weak, what must be the operation of these artificial inequalities which are so much greater?

The strong man has only a little while to live. In this respect there is perfect equality between the strong and the weak. He may have had tremendous power to grasp and to control the forces of production; he may have been able by skilful combinations to overbear his rivals, but they hold out against him because they know that this power of his must

soon be relaxed. Death will come and unnerve his arm and paralyze his will: most likely his gains will be scattered; in the field that he has dominated there will be room for others. But the corporation is subject to no such vicissitudes, and the individual who is brought into competition with it has very little hope of the relaxation of its power. The late President Walker has stated this fact so strongly that I am constrained to quote his words:

“It is because the hand into which these masses of capital are gathered is a dead hand, that the deepest injury is wrought to competition. The greatest fact in regard to human effort and enterprise is the constant imminence of disability and death. So great is the importance of this condition that it goes far to bring all men to a level in their actions as industrial agents. The man of immense wealth has no such superiority over the man of moderate fortune as would be indicated by the proportion of their respective possessions. To these unequals is to be added one vast common sum which mightily reduces the ratio of that inequality. The railroad magnate, master of a hundred millions, leaning forward in his eagerness to complete some new combination, falls without a sign, without a groan; his work forever incomplete; his schemes rudely broken; and at once the fountain of his great fortune parts into many heads, and his gathered wealth flows away in nu-

merous streams. No man can buy with money or obtain for love the assurance of one hour's persistence in his chosen work, in his dearest purpose. Here enters the State and creates an artificial person, whose powers do not decay with years ; whose hand never shakes with palsy, never grows senseless and still in death ; whose estate is never to be distributed ; whose plans can be pursued through successive generations of mortal men."<sup>1</sup>

As General Walker goes on to say, this is no conclusive reason why corporations should not exist: it may still be that their benefits are so great that we cannot dispense with them; but this is clearly one of their drawbacks. They do enter, as powerful disturbing influences, into the great realm of exchanges. They do enormously aggravate the natural inequalities among men. They do, therefore, impede the free action of many and shut the doors of enterprise in the face of multitudes. This is part of the price that we are paying for the good that they do. It is an enormous price, and we must not forget it.

It is not, you will observe, the material progress of the multitudes that is necessarily impeded by the growth of corporations, but their moral progress. It can be shown, no doubt, that they have cheapened breadstuffs and all

<sup>1</sup> *Scribner's Monthly*, i., 116.

the necessities of life. What they are killing out is individuality and enterprise. Here is a great corporation that combines the savings of a hundred men and the labor of a thousand men in the production of shoes. The work is all done by machinery, and each workman makes some small fraction of a shoe. The effect of this subdivision of labor in reducing the skill of the laborers, and in narrowing the discipline of their work is often referred to. There is room, perhaps, for difference of opinion about this. There are compensating advantages which must not be overlooked. But the effect upon the organizing power of the employing class is certainly depressing. If each of these hundred capitalists was compelled to employ his own capital in the manufacture of shoes we should have a hundred independent employers studying methods, discovering processes, watching the currents of trade, disciplining his own faculties in the great enterprises of production. The great corporation can produce shoes more cheaply because it can have more and better machinery ; but how much does it do in the way of producing men ? The great corporation is and must be under the control of one man : he has subordinates, of course, to whom some responsibility is committed, but the organizing and directing power is concentrated in one man. One organizer and

leader of business takes the place of a hundred. The effect of this concentration of directive energy upon the spirit of enterprise among the people at large cannot be easily estimated. It is evident that the system gives us cheaper shoes, and also cheaper men in the counting-room, if not in the shop.

Socialism proposes altogether to suppress individual enterprise, by putting all the capital into the control of the state, and giving the state the exclusive direction of all industrial organization. The corporate system of industry does not wholly suppress individual enterprise, but it is clear that it greatly restricts the area within which it may operate. It is a long step, therefore, in the direction of Socialism, and is hailed as such by all the socialistic philosophers.

"Socialists," says Mr. Kirkup, "regard these colossal corporations and the wealthy bosses that direct them as the greatest pioneers of their cause. By concentrating the economic functions of the country into large masses, they are simply helping forward the socialistic movement. Their mission is to displace the smaller capitalists, but they will thereby eventually undermine capitalism altogether. In proportion as the centralization of industry is pushed forward, the easier it will be for the democratic people to displace its capitalistic chiefs, and assume the control of it for the general good. They



are only hastening the time when a vast educated and organized democracy, subsisting on precarious wage-labor, will find itself face to face with a limited number of mammoth capitalists. Such a crisis can have but one result. The swifter, the more complete the success of the most powerful bosses, the quicker will be their overthrow by a democratic society. Such is the belief of socialists.”<sup>1</sup>

This is the horoscope of the hour as it is read by one of the ablest and most moderate of the scientific socialists. His anticipations may not be realized; but it is significant that he sees in this development of the corporate system of industries a movement in the direction of socialism. My only point is that the depressing effect upon enterprise, and thus upon intellect, of the corporate system, is similar, though of course less powerful, than that which would be produced by socialism; that something of the same kind of levelling and deadening effect which we might look for under a socialistic *régime* is already realized under the rule of the great industrial corporations.

There is another side to this picture to which our attention should be drawn. There are corporations whose action is uniformly more honest and more benevolent than the action of the average director of that corporation

<sup>1</sup> *Inquiry into Socialism*, p. 169.

would be; because there is some one man—perhaps more than one—whose standards are high, and whose influence is so positive that the standards of the rest are elevated by his personal influence. I have known several such corporations, in which the integrity and magnanimity of a few leaders have lifted a whole business to an exceptionally honorable plane. Much may be hoped for in this direction, if the men of moral power who are officers of corporations will recognize their responsibility.

It is also true that multitudes of men are employed by these corporations in fiduciary positions; and the integrity of these men is developed by trusting them. Embezzlers and defaulters do appear; but the trustworthiness of the many is noteworthy.

Here are hopeful elements in this problem. These are the points to be strengthened. Yet, making due account of these, I believe that the influence of the corporation, *as it now exists*, upon public vigor and public morality is decidedly injurious. For the advantages that we secure by means of the system of corporate industry we are paying a large price. If the effect of the employment of this agency is to lower the standards of commercial morality, to increase social inequalities, and to repress the individuality, the self-reliance, and the enterprise of the people, there is certainly a heavy

deduction to be made from the gains they bring us. If we still insist that we must have corporations, let us face the fact that they "come high." We must be rich, indeed, in all the virtues, if we can well afford them. Such a deterioration in the morals of a whole people is a tremendous injury. And it is precisely these subtle but deep-working forces that the ordinary student of statistics and finance is pretty sure to miss. Triumphant Democracy, counting its millions of population and its billions of wealth, reciting the enormous gains of its manufactures, its mines, its farms, footing up its thousands of miles of railroads, and boasting of the swiftness of its trains and the cheapness of its transportation, takes very little note of these effects upon the intelligence, the morality, the self-respect of the masses of the people. The fact that a period may be reached "when wealth accumulates and men decay," is a fact that your enthusiastic statistician ignores.

One of the economists of the time, discussing these very questions, points out that a certain great monopoly has cheapened the price of a certain commodity; and alleges that it would be far better for the people to support as paupers the unsuccessful competitors who have been crowded out of business by this monopoly, than to forego this great reduction

in the price of one of the necessities of life. Would it? That is the question I am trying to raise. How many paupers could we afford to produce, for the sake of getting our oil a few cents cheaper? I trust that we are not forced to choose between cheap commodities on one hand and the mental and moral integrity of the people on the other; I hope that we may have both; but I, for one, should be loath to see our wealth increasing at the cost of the degradation of our population. And if the methods by which we are carrying on our great industries are such that they are silently sapping the foundations of our national vigor, it is well for us to be forewarned. Is it not possible for us to correct, in part at least, some of these tendencies? Is there not some wise divine counter-working that we can discover and set on foot by which these demoralizing and destructive influences can be checked? It must be so. It cannot be that there is any such radical contrariety as now seems to be working out between the material and the moral well-being of the race. Corporations are an outgrowth of the social principle. It must be that they can be subdued to the service of the higher as well as of the lower nature of man.

Attempts have been made to regulate industrial corporations by law. In view of the in-

equalities that they introduce and the impediments that they put in the way of industrial freedom, some legislators have thought it expedient to put special burdens upon them. The State of Pennsylvania, if I mistake not, levies a special tax on all corporations. I am not at all sure about the wisdom of this; the corporation is not, like the saloon, an unmitigated evil, that ought to be discouraged by taxation; it is a great blind Samson that needs guidance. It has been grinding too much in the mills of the Philistines, no doubt; the problem is to turn its energies in other directions—not to cripple its energies by fines and disabilities.

Another proposition is the application to all corporations of that rule of publicity which is now applied to banks and insurance companies and railroads. The theory is that a creature like this, which owes its life to the state, should be kept under the constant surveillance of the state; that it should be compelled, periodically, to give account of its stewardship, and to publish full statements of its affairs. It is alleged that this enforced publicity has had a most salutary effect upon the management of banks and railroads; it is argued that it would remove many of the worst abuses connected with private corporations.

I am entirely clear that all corporations which

are based on franchises granted by the state or the city,—or all corporations which use public property, like the streets of a city,—should be subject to the rule of publicity; they are quasi-public corporations, and they are bound to have no secrets from the public whose property they are using, and by whose authority they exist. Every gas company, street railway company, electric light company, should be subject to this rule; the most rigid and stringent regulations should be made respecting their book-keeping, and their annual reports; and any concealment or misstatement of the truth should work a forfeiture of their charters.

Whether the same rule should be applied to private corporations is not so clear; but I am inclined to think that this will yet be regarded as the only safe policy. Every corporation derives its power from the state; and the state has a right to know,—it is bound to know, I think,—how this power is used. If any individual or partnership of individuals wishes to do business in this state, we may well hesitate about requiring them to publish their business secrets. Each of them is responsible for the debts of the concern; and that responsibility is sufficient to hold them to a pretty conservative business policy. But when a corporation is organized the case is greatly altered. The state has now stepped in and created a new

kind of person, with enormous powers, and very limited responsibilities; I think that it is a kind of person whose works should never be done in secret. The people, through their representatives, have conferred these powers upon this organization; now the people have a right to say: "We are interested parties to this contract; the power here employed is ours; we, the people, have a right as real as the right of any stockholder, to know how these powers are used; it is our business to supervise, with the utmost care, all such artificial personalities created by our laws, to see that they do no public injury."

Professor Hadley of Yale University is a sufficiently conservative publicist; but I find in an essay of his, published ten years ago, the suggestion that perhaps all corporations would one day be treated as railway corporations are to-day.

"There was a time," he says, "when railroads resented any attempt to secure publicity as much as manufacturing corporations would to-day. Yet when such publicity was enforced it was found to act as a protection instead of a harm to the legitimate interests of the property. The combination of secrecy and irresponsibility with limited liability opened the way for frauds upon the property-owners quite as much as upon the general public. It may be that the history of the railroad business

will repeat itself in other industries. *If regulation by public opinion and carefully enforced responsibility is resisted, there is danger of something far more stringent and sweeping.*"<sup>1</sup>

That men have the right to form combinations,—to associate themselves for a common end will not be denied. This is true of both laborers and capitalists. But when such associations are formed they must govern themselves, in their corporate capacity, by the same standard of morality as that which governs individuals. Apply this, first, as we endeavored to do in the last chapter, to combinations of laborers. A trades-union must not divest itself of social and moral obligation. Every trades-union is bound to consider well in all its action not only what may be the effect upon the interests of the trade represented, but what will be the effect upon all other classes. If it is permitted to these men to associate themselves together as a class, it is not permitted to them to separate themselves as a class from other classes, and to attempt to aggrandize themselves at the expense of other classes. Such conduct is precisely as abnormal and abhorrent to true social ethics as would be the attempt of the arms in the human body to strengthen themselves by weakening the legs, or of the

<sup>1</sup> *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, i., 44.



eyes to gain the mastery by stopping up the ears. "There is no schism in the body," Paul says; and there is no schism among economic classes, unless there is insanity in the body politic.

"The solidarity of labor," is the watchword of those laborers who sometime undertake to push their own interests to the neglect, and even to the injury, of all other classes. This is an utterly unsocial principle: it repudiates the corner-stone of republican democracy. Wage-workers can never be permitted in a republican government, to become a class by themselves, and to array themselves against all other classes.

The solidarity of labor is just as great a menace to the peace of the nation as would be the solidarity of capital. It is the *solidarity of society* which furnishes the true principle of all our conduct. We are all members one of another—laborers, employers, merchants, customers, professional people, artists, traders, all sorts and conditions of men; and this is the body to which we rightly apply the motto, "An injury to one is the concern of all." Not until our labor organizations clearly comprehend and fully recognize these larger relations and obligations will they cease to be a source of peril to the state.

I have thus tried to show that the Christian

law, which is really the fundamental principle of republican government, applies to the conduct of trades-unions. I have no doubt that every capitalist who reads this heartily accepts all that I have said on that subject. Perhaps there are some capitalists, however, who would demur to the pleading that the same law governs corporations. But the pleading is true. I repeat, with emphasis, that every combination of capitalists is bound to use its accumulated power with a steady regard for the welfare of the whole community. The truth at which I am aiming is vigorously put by a brilliant young clergyman<sup>1</sup> whose voice we are never again to hear. These words were written soon after the great strike in Chicago. If they repeat, in some measure, what has been said already, you will not, I think, be unwilling to hear them:

“Two human creations which are essential to the existence and continuance and magnificence of our civilization, are the machine and the corporation. There is no question as to the soullessness of the machine. The machine, no matter how perfectly developed, belongs to the order of nature and is entirely without personal rights or responsibilities. The corporation, however, equally a creature of man, has been, partly by fiat and

<sup>1</sup> Rev. J. P. Coyle, in *The Kingdom*.

partly by evolution, endowed with many of the rights and privileges and responsibilities of personality, and yet it is soulless. Because of this its existence has become the nightmare of this age. It is a 'Frankenstein.' It is a monster; and, as we are now learning, is never more to be dreaded than when it undertakes to play the *rôle* of benefactor. Unlike a machine, a corporation may become more powerful than the men who think they manage it. The engineer controls the mighty locomotive of the New York Central Railroad, or if he loses control, it can at the worst crush the animal life out of him. The President of the New York Central Railroad Company is the servant and not the master of the corporation, and it saps his manhood. Moreover, as the corporation enters into competition with individuals it forces them down to a standard of soullessness in business matters. The most powerful and important personage in our modern life, the one which controls more votes, shapes more legislation, exerts more sway over the minds of courts than any other class of personage, is a personage without a soul.

"What is to be done about it? And are we able to do what should be done? Or is it too late? Have we created something which we ought not to have created but cannot now destroy? Was it a mistake to personify the corporation? If so can it now be depersonified? Can it and ought it to be taken out of the kingdom of man and degraded to the kingdom of nature along with the machine? Or is the more divine thing to go on and implant a

soul in it? And are we, the men of to-day, divine enough, is there enough of God in us, to go through with what we have begun, and breathe the breath of life into these beings which we have created that they may become living souls? May God help us!"

What is the precise question now before us. Let us analyze the subject-matter:

1. All power ought to be wielded by intelligence and conscience. To put vast power into the hands of a being that has neither intelligence nor conscience is a criminal procedure.

2. Property is power,—the most concentrated kind of power.

3. Property must, therefore, always be controlled by intelligence and conscience. If the state puts vast accumulations of property into the control of beings that are lacking either in intelligence or conscience, the state is guilty of an enormous wrong.

4. It is a common saying that corporations have no souls. If so they must be lacking in conscience, if not in intelligence. I suppose that this is the real meaning of the saying—that a corporation has no moral sense, and must not be expected to govern itself by the ordinary principles of morality.

It is, however, by no means true that all corporations are administered without regard to moral principle. The men who constitute

some corporations are just as scrupulously upright in administering their affairs as they would be in administering a private estate. It is quite possible to conduct the business of a corporation with a constant regard for the rights and interests of the whole community. When it is so administered it is a beneficent power. And the law of Christ requires every man who is a member of a corporation to see to it that it is administered in this way, and in no other.

But a great many corporations have accepted the theory of their own soullessness, and live up to it as well as they can. Their power is used in a perfectly conscienceless manner for the spoliation of the community and for their own enrichment. They contrive to levy vast tribute upon the industry of the whole country: their burdens are borne by all classes. And this is done, in many cases, by a most flagrant violation of law.

Take two instances. The Atchison railway system, which was lately in the hands of a receiver, was reported, by an expert accountant, as having been managed with an entire disregard of common honesty. Its resources were overstated to the extent of seven millions of dollars; and thus investors were deceived and swindled. I heard bitter words spoken about it in England summer before last that made

me blush for my country. It has practised a systematic evasion of the Inter-State Commerce Law by which unlawful rebates, to the extent of four millions of dollars, have been concealed. All this is criminal action. Here is a great corporation defying the law and defrauding the community. The extent of the wreckage caused by this failure will be five times greater than the destruction of property in the Chicago riots. Mr. Debs went to jail, I believe. How about the Atchison magnates? When combinations of laborers work mischief we all cry out that they must be punished. Are we quite as strenuous in our demands that when worse mischiefs are wrought, by methods no less nefarious, but a little more genteel, they also shall be punished? That is one instance. Here is another:

Senator Sherman stated, not long ago, in his place in the Senate, that the incorporators of the Sugar Trust, "upon a basis of \$9,000,000 issued \$75,000,000 of stock, and \$10,000,000 of bonds, and paid upon it, watered stock and all, from six to twelve per cent. interest every year, *every dollar of which was at the cost of the people of the United States.*" We know, in part, how they have managed to do it: their contribution of campaign funds to both political parties has enabled them to manipulate the national legislature. But is it not monstrous

that such a tribute as this should be levied upon a whole nation for the enrichment of a few men? And is it not clear that property which is administered in this way becomes not only an awful engine of oppression, but a tremendous menace to our liberties? ✓

Now I think that if we, the people of America, mean that this nation shall continue to stand for a genuine Christian democracy we must at once confront the fact that the day of judgment has fully come to all these great combinations of corporate wealth. Such vast accumulations of power cannot be left in the hands of soulless and conscienceless organizations. These corporations must find out whether they have souls or not. If they have souls and will demonstrate the fact by a conscientious administration of their trusts, there will be no disposition to interfere with them; they will be honored and praised and rejoiced in, as the ministers of God. Such they are now, in cases not a few. But whenever it becomes evident that they are getting to be gigantic egoisms, that they recognize no relation to the community but that of a predaceous animal, then their power must be taken from them, at whatever cost. The nation is itself a moral organism, and it cannot entrust the greatest power under its control to immoral or unmoral agents. The nation must see that

its enormous resources of material power are kept under the control of intelligence and conscience. A man has conscience and moral sensibility; and it is safe therefore to leave him free, under moral influences, to handle the resources of material wealth. But if a corporation has neither conscience nor moral sensibility—if that is the nature of the creature,—and, if there is no room in its constitution for the development of such faculties, then it cannot rightly administer wealth; and the nation must take it firmly in hand and establish a rigid supervision of all its affairs.

I think that in this rather cursory discussion I have uncovered certain “dangerous tendencies of current industrial life.” And I believe that the principles which I have just stated are perfectly clear and perfectly sound. You get down here to foundations which are as solid as Gibraltar. And it is high time that we had cleared the rubbish from these foundations, and had begun to build the fabric of our jurisprudence firmly upon them. When we are ready to do this, we shall find, I think, that outbreaks of violence from the working-classes will be much less frequent. This nation cannot afford to give any room to the suspicion that combinations of laborers are judged by a more rigorous law than combinations of capitalists. Upon both these classes of combina-



tions must be enforced the Christian law which binds us all to use all our powers with constant reference to the common good. This is the way of righteousness and it is the only way of peace.





## IV

### THE RAILWAY

WE come now to the discussion of the corporations which are created by the state, not simply for private gain, for the convenience and profit of their stockholders, but also for the service of the public. Banks are such corporations; it is through their agency that the state is furnished with a large part of its circulating medium; they are the institutions by which the great business of exchange is organized and facilitated; their transactions affect immediately and vitally the interests of the whole community, and they are brought under the surveillance and control of the government. As often, at least, as once a year, and as many times oftener as may be deemed expedient, the comptroller of the currency sends his inspectors to make inquisition into all the business of the bank; to find out whether it is solvent or not, and whether or not it is

transacting its business according to the methods prescribed by law. The consequence of this vigilant supervision is a sound and stable condition of the currency. There are differences of opinion concerning the terms on which our bankers are allowed to transact their business, but the confidence of the people in the soundness of our banking system is deep and steadfast; we have no misgivings respecting the bank notes that pass through our hands; we know that they are good money; and we have very little fear that the sums which we entrust to the keeping of our national banks will not be safely guarded. Defalcations do occur in national banks, but they are rare. What a great and beneficent change was wrought in this department of life by the establishment of the national banking system, some of us can well remember. The uncertainties, the panics, the rascally failures and the consequent losses which were constantly burdening the people before the government took this business under its control were a serious impediment to trade and a perennial source of suffering. It is evident that government control and regulation works well in the case of one kind of corporations. It is evident that the enforced publicity under which the operations of national banks must be carried on, is wholesome for them and for the people. It is

probable that the banking system could be vastly improved, but its subjection to governmental inspection is undoubtedly wise.

Elevator companies, gas companies and railway companies are other instances of quasi-public corporations. Of these the railway corporations are, of course, the most important, and it will be more convenient to concentrate our thought mainly upon them. The ethical principles that are involved in the conduct of all quasi-public corporations will come to light in our study of the railway problem.

It is hardly necessary to say that this is a problem of the largest import. The public discussions of the last few years have made that evident enough. The appearance, during the last generation, of these colossal forces in the industrial arena, has put a new aspect upon human life, and has introduced into conduct some of the most difficult and complicated questions with which the conscience of man is now confronted. We can have, in this place, but a subordinate interest in this as a merely commercial question. It is true that every philanthropic man is interested in the promotion of the material welfare of his fellowmen; for although man is a spirit he has a body, and provision must be made for its sustenance and comfort. Nevertheless, it is not primarily the material or economic aspects of the question

before us with which we are now concerned. It is only as the economic forces affect the moral life of the community that they come into view in these discussions.

I have said that the railway company is a *quasi-public* corporation. It differs from the incorporated manufacturing company, whose object is the transaction of a private business for purposes of gain; it differs from the college corporation or the philanthropic corporation, whose duty it is to hold in trust and to administer, usually without reward, the property and the funds that have been devoted to educational or philanthropic purposes; it differs from the political corporation of the village or the city, to which certain functions of government are committed. It is not, like the last, a *purely* public organization, for it is assumed that the corporators will make use of their franchise for their own benefit, in part; nor is it like the first, a purely private organization, for it is the implied condition of the franchise that the corporators will not only seek their own benefit, but that they will also serve the public.

This relation to the public of the railway corporation is very imperfectly understood. It has often been assumed by railway managers that the public had no more right to inquire into the affairs of a railroad than to investigate

the business of a private firm. The attempts of the public to find out the facts about the railroads, and to bring their managers to account have sometimes been hotly resented; you all know how Mr. Wm. H. Vanderbilt once consigned the public, who wanted to know about some of his railway affairs, to a place where railroads are not practicable, owing to the steepness of the grades. This feeling of the managers has found expression, also, in the legal opinions of some of the railway lawyers. No less an authority than Mr. George Tichnor Curtis contended, not many years ago, that railway corporations are private companies, and that they are not subject to legislative regulation. Writers on this subject have often assumed that the railways "own and control their tracks as absolutely as a manufacturing corporation owns its mill." It was known, of course, by all these lawyers, that the courts in the early days of the railroads very positively affirmed the public character of these corporations, and the unquestioned right of the state to regulate them; but they seem to have supposed that a new order of things had somehow arisen; that the railways, by some means, had become independent of the state, and that the old legal rules could no longer be applied. Thus one of them has said:

"The necessities of modern progress rendered a

modification of old theories, and even of old principles, inevitable ; and, since the introduction of railways, the idea that private property taken for the purpose of travel in a peculiar manner and under new conditions is a public highway, is no longer tenable and in practice is not recognized. The old theory of the rights of the public in such a road was necessarily modified in practice, though it still lingered in the minds of some jurists.”<sup>1</sup>

If the writer who expressed this opinion only a dozen years ago is still alive, he must have found some reason since he wrote for doubting whether these old principles are yet obsolete after all. Most true it was that the railway companies had repudiated them, and that their subservient tools in many legislatures and in some courts had ignored them, but the whole trend of recent decisions has been to establish the public character of these corporations, and to maintain the right of the state to regulate and control them.

A railway corporation derives its existence from legislation. It is the action of the sovereign people, through their representatives, that calls it into being. It is not a natural person, and it has no natural rights ; it is a creature of the legislature, and can possess only those rights and powers conferred upon it by the

<sup>1</sup> Crafts, quoted by Hudson, *The Railways and the Republic*, p. 114.

legislature. To assume that the creator has no right to control the creature is absurd upon the face of it.

The legislature, whose power is all derived from the people, confers upon the railway company the charter by which it exists. The legislature cannot confer upon the railway company any power to impair or obstruct the equal industrial freedom of the people. The legislature, which holds no power but that which is delegated to it by the people, certainly has not the power to enslave the people, nor to fetter or impede their industrial freedom. What the legislature itself cannot do, it cannot authorize any of its creatures to do. And if any of the creatures of the legislature undertake to exercise powers not committed to them by the legislature, and powers which are inimical to industrial freedom, the legislature is bound to restrain their action or to cancel their franchises.

This is the postulate, I think, underlying all grants of corporate powers by the legislature—that they shall be exercised in such a way as not to impair the equal industrial freedom of the whole people. It is only within these limits that the legislature has any right to make such grants. It is absurd to say that a legislative body in a democracy can endow a corporation with powers by which it may sub-



vert the very foundations of democratic government, the fundamental rights of man. It is perfectly evident that the primary duty of the legislature toward all such corporations, is to restrain them from undertaking to exercise such powers.

So much must be true of all corporations. But the case of a railroad differs widely from that of what are known as private corporations. The railroad company is not only a creature of the legislature, but the legislature puts forth on its behalf its supreme prerogative, in the exercise of the right of eminent domain. Mr. Hudson says that there is probably not a railroad in the country, ten miles long, that has not acquired possession of the land on which its track is laid by the exercise of this power. It could never have gained its right of way by any other means. The state has stepped in, in every case, and has taken land belonging to individuals, awarding to them only such damages as it chose to do, and has put this property thus forcibly taken from them under the care and management of the railway company. The state has a right to take private property in this way. This is the right of eminent domain. Private property of all kinds is always subordinated to public necessities. If the railroad company wishes a right of way through my farm or my house-lot, my individual right

is not regarded; my wishes are not consulted; the state takes my property from me on its own terms, and gives it to the railroad. But this can be done only because the public need calls for it. My property is taken not for the private gain of the railway projectors, but for the public service.

And this is not always the extent of the state's interference in behalf of the railroad. Very often the representatives of the people, Federal, State, or Municipal, have made large grants of land, or of the credit of the commonwealth, to these railway companies. Whole empires of the public domain have been distributed among these companies, and states and cities and towns have taxed themselves heavily to provide funds for the building of railways. The United States has given to railroad companies two hundred and fifteen million acres—an area equal to six Illinoises, eight Ohios, sixty Connecticuts. There have also been given to railroads in this country \$185,000,000 in municipal bonds.

Such being the relation of the state to the railway companies, can any one seriously contend that they are private corporations? Could Congress lawfully bestow such enormous grants of land and such prodigious subsidies upon private corporations? Could the States and the municipalities tax their citizens for money

wherewith to aid private enterprises? The fact of these governmental subsidies indicates the public character of the railways. If a company were incorporated in any city to start some new and profitable industry—a woollen mill, or a cutlery concern—do you think that the legislature would authorize the city to issue its bonds in aid of the enterprise? It is rather rash to predict what a legislature would do; indeed, I am not sure that such things have not sometimes been done; but it is clear enough that such action would be grossly unjust. It is only public enterprises that are rightfully so aided.

The railroads have not all received this kind of subvention from the state. But all of them, as I have said, have gained the land whereon their tracks are laid, by the exertion in their behalf of the supreme function of the state. Is it for one moment supposed by any one that the state steps in and by force takes the land of its citizens, A, B, and C, and hands the title of it over to other citizens, D, E, and F, members of a railway corporation, to be used by them, as private citizens, or as a private company, in an enterprise whose only motive is private gain? The supposition is too repugnant to all our notions of equal justice to be entertained by any one. The state may take my land for *public* purposes, and *can* take it

rightfully for no other purposes; and the corporation for whose benefit it takes this land must therefore be a quasi-public corporation. The corporation thus empowered and supported by the state is not only like every corporation, a creature of the state, but it has been created by the state with a definite public function,—to perform for the people a specific public service. Unless this character of a public servant was clearly impressed upon it, the state could not rightly exert on its behalf the right of eminent domain. And every act which it performs, must be in perfect harmony with the character thus impressed upon it.

I have alluded to the early decisions of the courts on the question. None is clearer than that of Chancellor Walworth, in 1831:

“(1) Railroads are public improvements for which the legislature can authorize the appropriation of land on just compensation to the owner; (2) the privilege of making such a road and taking tolls thereon, when granted to an individual or a corporation, is a franchise subject to the public interest and under legislative regulation; (3) the sovereign power could not take the property of one citizen and transfer it to another, even upon full compensation, except for public purposes; and an act of the legislature doing so would be repugnant to the constitution of the United States.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Hudson, p. 117.

The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, in 1853, through Judge Black, affirmed the principle that subscriptions by municipalities in aid of railways were constitutional solely on the ground that they aided the construction of a public highway. Three years later, the same court gave another decision involving the forfeiture of a railway charter, in which the utter subordination to the public use and public control of all property taken by the right of eminent domain was asserted in the strongest terms. The lands for the road, as the court said, "were taken for public use, else they could not have been taken at all."<sup>1</sup> These are the decisions which some of the railway lawyers were inclined, a few years ago, to regard as obsolete; but the later decisions have so uniformly upheld these principles that there is not now any room for dispute about them. That a railway is not a private property but a public highway, subject to the regulation of the state as truly as a turnpike or a canal, is now unquestioned law.

"The highways in a State," said Mr. Justice Bradley of the Supreme Court, "are the highways of the State. Convenient ways and means of intercommunication are the first evidence of the civilization of a people. The highways of a country

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 120.

are not of private but of public institution and regulation. In modern times, it is true, government is in the habit, in some countries, of letting out the construction of important highways, requiring a large expenditure of capital, to agents, generally corporate bodies created for the purpose, and giving to them the right of taxing those who travel or transport goods thereon as a means of obtaining compensation for their outlay. But a superintending power over the highways and the charges imposed upon the public for their use always remains in the government. This is not only its indefeasible right, but is necessary for the protection of the people against extortion and abuse. These positions we deem to be incontrovertible. Indeed they are adjudged law in the decisions of this court. Railroads and railroad corporations are in this category.”<sup>1</sup>

It is true that the railroad corporation is organized for gain. It expects to make money by the operation of this public highway. It is entitled to take such tolls and to make such charges as will fairly remunerate its stockholders for the investment of their capital. But the paramount obligation is the service of the public. The sovereign people have not granted this franchise to this corporation, in order that the corporation may enrich itself at the expense of the people. The private

<sup>1</sup> *U. S. Supreme Court Reports* 118, p. 586.

gain is to be always subservient to the public advantage.

I have been particular to set forth with some iteration the fundamental principles upon which all railway corporations are founded, because we can never deal with these corporations in any adequate manner until these principles are understood. When we are convinced of their truth, we shall be ready to make some practical applications of them.

It will appear, in the first place, as we have already said, that the duty of the state to regulate the transactions of these railway corporations is inevitable and imperative. As quasi-public corporations they must submit all their affairs to a rigid inspection and supervision of the state. One of the first duties of the state is to protect stockholders. This duty has always been recognized, but it has been indifferently performed. I shall not attempt to describe the methods by which innocent investors have been plundered by railway officials; their name is legion. Fictitious dividends, paid with borrowed money, to enhance the value of stock, when they wish to sell it; dividends withheld to depress the value of stock when they wish to buy it; negligent management which causes the property to depreciate, so that they may get it into their own hands; false accounts that tempt and betray

investors—all such things are far too common. The wrecking of railroads by their managers has been a great source of wealth to unscrupulous men. The moral sense of the public has not expressed itself as it ought to do, in laws, sternly enforced, by which such robberies are made impossible. The intricacies of these operations are vast, and the common people have not understood them well enough to deal intelligently with them. Under cover of this popular ignorance enormous wrongs have been done to those who have risked their savings in the purchase of railway shares.

One of the common methods of defrauding stockholders is the creation of parasitic corporations, which draw their profits out of the earnings of the road. The railway parasite has flourished in nearly all of the great systems, and it is a kind of thing that greatly needs to be reformed out of existence.

It may be a construction company, or a coal company, or a fast freight company; it may be some tributary line. It is an organization largely made up of officers of the road; it transacts business in connection with the road, and absorbs a large part of its earnings. Thus the managers of the road give special favors and facilities to themselves as managers of the parasite; the profits of the road are reduced that the profits of the parasite may be in-



creased; it appears in the reports that the road is making but little money and the stockholders find that the dividends are small; the reason is that the earnings of the road are diverted, in one way or another, into the treasury of the parasite. When you see that the dividends of certain railroads are small—only two or three per cent. on the stock—you can sometimes explain the fact in this way. It is by devices such as these and by devices even worse than these that some railway managers have made enormous fortunes.

“These dishonest methods,” says Dr. Bascom, “tend to destroy confidence everywhere, and make a most extended and conspicuous branch of business the chosen field of commercial bandits. The loss to the community in the fluctuating value of stocks, in the reduction of the opportunities of safe investment, in weakening the motives of thrift, in displacing sober productive labor with needless speculation, in occasioning the withdrawal of foreign capital and in aggravating every tendency to commercial panic, is beyond all measurement. The feeble are discouraged, the strong are distressed, the rash are elated, and all are injured save here and there one who has a genius for dishonesty.”<sup>1</sup>

The moral devastation which has been wrought in the community by the prevalent

<sup>1</sup> *Social Theory*, p. 377.

methods of railway financiering must thus be added to the sum of injury inflicted by unscrupulous managers upon innocent investors.

The protection of the stockholders has, however, as I have said, been generally considered the duty of the state. The duty has been performed with great slackness, but it has been acknowledged.

But railway finances may be managed in such a way that they shall greatly oppress the public as well as the stockholders, and against this kind of oppression the laws and the courts seem to furnish but little protection. The legal right of the managers and the stockholders, acting in concert, to lay burdensome tribute upon the community at large, is often assumed, and some decisions seem to support it.

Here is a case, pretty well known in my own neighborhood, in which the directors of a railway, owning nearly if not quite all the stock, proceed to mortgage the property for eight millions of dollars. The bonds issued bear on their face the legend that their proceeds are to be used for double-tracking and otherwise improving the road. Very little of the money is thus used, however; and, putting in their pockets nearly the whole amount for which the road is mortgaged, the directors sell the road, with its heavy incumbrance, and walk off with the booty.

It is said that since they owned the road they had the right to mortgage it as heavily as they pleased, and do what they chose with the money. But if a railway corporation is a quasi-public corporation, then there is another party in interest here. The directors hold the property in trust, not only for the stockholders, but also for the public. Can it be possible that the law confers on them the right to put a burden on the property which shall become a burden on the whole community? Does not their franchise, granted them by the community, imply that the property is to be used for the benefit of the community?

Yet the interest on this added debt, and the principal, too, must be paid, if it is ever paid, by the people who travel on this railway and transport freight upon it. Upon the patrons of this road, upon the community at large, the whole of this heavy tribute is levied; it is a tax upon the business of the entire region; every passenger who rides upon the road must pay because of it a heavier fare than he would otherwise need to have paid; every ton of coal, every barrel of flour, every pound of freight that passes over it is assessed to fill the hungry void that has been created in the finances of the corporation. In the community of which this road is the chartered servant, all the necessities of life are dearer to every laboring man

because of the impost thus levied upon its traffic.

English kings in the olden time were wont to levy tribute of this sort upon their subjects, for their own pleasures; they called these levies, with a fine irony, benevolences. Edward IV. began this business; Wolsey carried it on for the benefit of the Tudor Bluebeard, and Hampden, you may remember, had something to do with ending it. It is high time that some Hampden arose to put an end to worse exactions, levied upon the whole community by railway financiers. The American people are paying tribute to-day, in the shape of interest upon just such incumbrances, amounting to hundreds of millions of dollars, laid upon the railroads of this country. Must we admit that the officers of these corporations possess the legal power to oppress their fellow citizens in this way? Is there no remedy at law for offenses of this nature? It seems to me little less than absurd to suppose that the law, by any fair interpretation of its intent, could have given to railway directors the power to impose, for their own enrichment, such burdens as these upon the community. It seems to me that it would be no rash or novel extension of judicial power—not nearly so rash or so novel as some which we have lately witnessed—to hold directors of quasi-

public corporations responsible, not merely to their stockholders, but also to the public; and to set aside as invalid every act which is in plain violation of that implied public trust which is involved in their franchises. But if there be no remedy at common law, or under existing statutes, for such stupendous robberies of the public, it is high time that legislation were invoked by which it may be arrested and punished.

Not only by taxes imposed broadly upon the whole commonwealth for their personal enrichment, but also by discriminations in behalf of favored individuals or communities, the railways have often abused the power committed to them, or, rather, have usurped powers never committed to them. The condition of their franchise is, and must be, an equal public service. They have no right to grant to one individual or one company or one community privileges which they deny to another. Created as they are, by the sovereign people, for the service of the people, they must serve all the people alike. The legislature, from which they derive all their powers, not only has no power to make such discriminations, but exists for the very purpose of preventing such discriminations, or of punishing them, and of assuring to all men, as far as possible, equal industrial freedom. The legislature cannot abolish the differ-

ences among natural persons ; it cannot equalize the powers of the strong and the weak ; but it is bound to see that the artificial persons which it creates and arms with the mighty powers of the state, do not exert these powers in the promotion of still greater inequalities. If private persons, and even private corporations, do make such discriminations, public corporations must not. The legislature itself cannot give to one man or one class of men industrial or commercial advantages that it refuses to others ; it cannot tax some for the benefit of others ; it cannot encourage large traders and discourage small traders ; and what the legislature itself cannot do it cannot empower or allow its creature and agent the railway corporation to do.

It is urged that according to strict business principles, the large shipper is entitled to lower rates, and that the railway is thus justified in extending favors to the strong which it withholds from the weak. The answer to this is that justice is not administered, nor the power of the state exerted, on " strict business principles."

The extensive litigant, the man who does a great deal of business in our courts, is not entitled on that account to a rebate on his costs ; the man who has a great deal of property subject to taxation is not permitted to have the tax rate reduced on his behalf. Very likely

he gets it lowered, but he does not do so lawfully or rightfully. The only principle on which the state can act is that of absolute equality. And the railroad, as a quasi-public corporation, deriving its powers from the state, must act on the same principle. It must make no discrimination, whatever, among its patrons. Of course it may fix rates for car-loads that it could not allow for smaller quantities—because of the greater convenience of handling; but it must take the poor man's car-load at the same rate as the rich man's; it must have a uniform rule for all its shippers and all its passengers.

A powerful individual dealer, or a powerful firm may adopt this principle of favoring the largest customers. That is one of the ways in which the strong in nature devour the weak. We cannot, by our legislation, set aside that natural law, so far as the conduct of individuals is concerned. To attempt to counteract, by the power of the state, these natural inequalities, would be futile and probably mischievous. But when the state, with its agents, steps into the industrial realm, it must govern all its conduct and all their conduct by the higher principle of perfect equality. It must show no favors and permit none. In the words of Mr. Hudson:

“The railway is created by law to fulfil a public

purpose—that of affording improved transportation on equal terms to all persons whom it can serve. Whatever is necessary for the honest and impartial discharge of that one function it has a right to do. It can make such charges as will yield it a profit on the investment of its capital ; but it must distribute the burden of its charges evenly among all its patrons, in proportion to the service rendered. It is designed to overcome the obstacle of distance ; but it should overcome that obstacle for the benefit of all, and it is not within its objects to bring one locality nearer to market than another and to make the latter support it in doing so. It is a public servant, not a public tyrant which can enrich and magnify its favorites at the general expense. . . . It is not a commercial providence to exalt one vessel to honor and to doom another to dishonor. . . . A creature of the state, it must not become a conspirator against commerce, either by building up monopolies for its favorites, or by organizing them for its own profit.”<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Hudson says that the railway must not do all these evil things, and we must all agree with him ; but these are, in fact, the very things that the railway has been constantly doing for a great many years. One reason why it has had the power to do such things is that it possesses, through the greater part of the territory which it serves, an absolute monopoly of the

<sup>1</sup> *The Railways and the Republic*, p. 153.



business. Out of something less than forty thousand railway stations in the United States, less than three thousand are junction points; many of these are points where branches of the same railway system come together; many others are points where a north and south road crosses an east and west road in such a way as to offer no effective competition; so that there are really only a few hundred railway stations in the whole country which are really competitive points. The people of a vast majority of our communities (not, however, a vast majority of the whole population) have no choice among railroads; they must patronize the one that comes to their door.

The larger cities are, indeed, generally favored with many competing railway lines; but at these points the competition becomes intense, and intense competition always tends to a combination which results in monopoly. For my own part I do not believe that it is physically, morally, or legally possible to maintain among railroads at these competitive points a wholesome competition. The tendency towards a competition which shall be destructive, and which shall thus issue in monopoly, is simply irresistible. Here, for example, are half a dozen trunk lines between Chicago and the East. Let us suppose that the business is now fairly divided between them so that each has enough

to render a fair profit on its invested capital. But each one of these roads knows that if it could manage to get a good slice of the business of its rivals, it could well afford to do that business for half the rates that they are charging, because *additional* traffic costs almost nothing. "Receipts from additional traffic," says Mr. Baker, "are almost clear profit." The trains must be run, the trainmen paid, all the official and working machinery of the road kept in motion, whether the traffic is light or heavy; and there is, therefore, a tremendous temptation to each of these roads to try to get away the business of the others at secret rates or rebates,—such a temptation as does not at all occur in merchandising or manufacturing, where a sweeping reduction of prices on additional traffic would mean immediate and heavy loss. Under the stress of this temptation, railway competition always tends to become destructive. The stronger road will either destroy the weaker, or else they will combine or consolidate. In either case competition ends in monopoly.

"The railway," says Mr. Baker, "*is essentially a monopoly* ; not, be it noted, because of any special wickedness of its managers or owners, but because competition is impossible as regards the greater part of its business, and because, wherever competition is possible, its effect, as the managers well

know, would be to annihilate all profits from the operation of the road.”<sup>1</sup>

The natural course of the managers would be to recoup themselves for the losses suffered at the competitive points by raising the rates at the non-competitive points, and thus a vast system of discrimination among places grew up, by which the cities were enriched at the expense of the villages, and business was practically killed in all the smaller places. In this way enormous injuries have been inflicted upon thousands of communities; hundreds of millions of dollars, invested in homes and productive industries in the smaller places have been virtually confiscated. Such a power never was lodged in human hands for the control of human industries. No despotic government on the face of the earth to-day possesses so much power over the economic welfare of a people as has been held and exercised by one hundred men, at the head of the great railway systems of the United States. The exercise of this power in dominating the industries of this country has been and is to-day subversive of industrial freedom. It is not true that this is a free country. It is a rich country, a prosperous country, but it is not a free country. There is an *imperium in imperio* that acts far

<sup>1</sup> *Monopolies and the People*, p. 52.

more directly and more powerfully than the government itself upon the life of every citizen, dispensing unearned favors to some, and by just so much abridging the liberties and lessening the chances of others.

The discrimination between places is a fact for which railway managers can hardly be blamed. They cannot help themselves. It is not any evil will of theirs which leads them thus to favor some communities at the expense of others; it is the logical result of an attempt to manage a natural monopoly on competitive principles.

Discrimination between persons or companies is more flagitious, and hardly less injurious. Here is the *fons et origo* of an amount of moral debauchery that is simply appalling. Said Mr. Charles Francis Adams:

"The dishonest methods of rate cutting, the secret system of rebates, the indirect and hidden payments made to influence the course of traffic resorted to or devised during the last two years, I do not hesitate to say are unprecedented in the whole bad record of the past. . . . Yet among us railroad men the fact that these things are done is notorious. It is all part and parcel of that sneak-thief and pickpocket method of doing business which has become a second nature in certain grades of railroad service." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Inter-State Commerce Act*, pp. 3-4.

This discrimination between persons, in the words of Dr. Bascom,

“Destroys all conditions of justice, equality, between man and man and proceeds wholly in secret. One engaged in the produce business in a large city finds his traffic, for unexplained reasons, slipping from him. He goes to the source of supply and discovers that lower freights have been granted to competitors. He immediately bestirs himself to secure better rates. He returns to his place of business and shortly finds that all the irrigating streams of commerce run his way, and that his neighbors’ fields now lie parched. All goes well till some one else meddles with the water at its fountains.

“Great monopolies, like the four great companies at Chicago which have so long governed the meat market, stamping on every village and country market and cart in New England ‘Chicago Beef,’ owe their growth to railroad connections too powerful to be broken. The commercial world has never seen more numerous, more extended, more injurious monopolies than those which have now come to control trade in the United States. Two cars containing butter arrive in Boston the same day, one from a retired station in Vermont, one in the great line of trade from Iowa. The first is delivered in a common car in poor order; the second in a refrigerator in excellent order, and at rates not exceeding those charged the first lot. No natural footing for business remains to the average citizen.

Each man and each company get what advantages they can steal and no others; and this perpetual pilfer is called competition, and takes to itself the authority of an economic law.”<sup>1</sup>

The effect of all this upon business interests is obvious enough, but our main concern is with the effect upon the morals of trade, upon the character of men. An influence more disastrous to public morals it would be hard to imagine. The conscience of the whole community has become more or less perverted by the secret favoritisms and injustices and corruptions of this system. And yet, as Mr. Bonham has said,

“The origin of these iniquities cannot be traced to any one individual. No one railway manager at any time, now or since the beginning, can properly be charged with the creation of the system; nor even can any single combination be held responsible for its existence. In the broad sense it has been an impersonal evolution.”<sup>2</sup> . . . We should remember that the men who are connected with the railway system and who have been under its influence, are men, who, considered one with another, are neither better nor worse than any like number of men taken indiscriminately.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Social Theory*, pp. 387-388.

<sup>2</sup> *Railway Secrecy and Trusts*, p. 51.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 56.

Of course, there are those who fall in very naturally with these crooked ways; and there are many others who chafe under such conditions, and would be glad to be honest if they could, but the system of secrecy seems to coerce them; it is almost impossible for any man to escape from the toils of the traditional methods.

It was because these discriminations had come to be intolerable that the Inter-State Commerce Commission was created, and armed with certain powers to supervise rates and prevent extortion. The Commission has done something to remedy the evils complained of, but its powers are quite inadequate, and the old mischiefs are still rife. The rebates and concessions to favored shippers have not ceased; they are only more carefully concealed. There may be less of overt oppression than there was, but there is more of subterranean dishonesty. The testimony of Mr. Adams, quoted a little while ago, refers to two years of the operation of the Inter-State Law. It is evident that we have not gone to the root of the matter. A remedy far more drastic than this law will have to be provided.

It must be plain to every one that we have before us at this hour, a question of surpassing moment. Here is a social force of the very first order; the work that it is doing in society

—the effects that it is producing, not only in the economic but also in the moral realm—are incalculably important. If I have emphasized the injuries which, as at present organized, it is inflicting, it is not because I am unmindful of the good that it has wrought. The application of the power of steam to the business of transportation has indeed wrought beneficent wonders. It has cheapened and facilitated communication almost miraculously; it has abolished famine; it has developed industries; it has mobilized labor; it has reduced the price of the necessities of life; it has strengthened the bonds of good neighborhood. These gains are not, of course, mainly due to the managers of existing railways; the scientific and industrial discoveries that have resulted in this railway system are the contributions of many minds; they are the gains of civilization. Nevertheless, it is true that to the enterprise and sagacity of our modern railway builders and managers much praise is due. They are entitled to a large reward for the benefits that they have conferred upon society. Nor—let me repeat it with emphasis—am I disposed to attribute the oppression and dishonesty of the existing railway systems to the depravity of these men. The evil is in the system itself; I have my doubts whether a staff of angels could manage an American railway successfully under



the present system; I fear that they would soon be fallen angels.

What is the root of the difficulty? What is it that has perverted an agency so necessary to the well-being of the people, so capable of beneficent service, into a power so often oppressive and malign? It seems to me that it has arisen from the futile attempt to govern a business which is inevitably and properly a monopoly by the law of competition. There are some kinds of business which cannot be done by competition. The business of driving vehicles through a crowded city street cannot be submitted to the law of competition. The policeman takes his stand in the middle of the street and compels the drivers to keep in line on either side. No one is suffered to attempt to pass those in front of him. Competition is not allowed to a multitude in approaching the ticket office of a railway station or a theatre. Each must take his place in the line and keep it. What would be the effect if the policeman in charge, instead of enforcing this rule of the line, should propose that the first man to be waited on should be the man who would offer him the largest tip or the man who should push the hardest?

Suppose that a municipality should permit the location, the width, and the grade of the city streets to be settled by competition, author-

izing anybody to go ahead and lay out a street as it pleased him, those to be accepted which seemed to be the most desirable. The strife, the scrambling, the bribery, the log-rolling of the real-estate operators can be imagined. I have very serious doubts, also, whether it would be good policy to turn the business of detecting and punishing crime over to competition. Something of this kind is sometimes done, but is it doubtful policy. It is safer, I think, that the state should have the monopoly of this whole business.

The great business of railway transportation never will be managed well upon competitive principles. I judge that it never will be, because, as a matter of history, it never has been. It is essentially a monopoly; and the attempt to force it under the law of competition must result in economic wreck and moral ruin. It is a monopoly, and a monopoly which the government must either own or firmly control. This is the goal ahead of us; the sooner we clearly see it and shape our course to reach it, the better for our peace.

Doubtless we must make haste slowly. Perhaps the first step should be the enactment of a law absolutely forbidding secrecy in railroad business and the creation of a tribunal strong enough to enforce it. The quasi-public corporation must have no business which the

whole public may not know. Every railway tariff must be published and strictly adhered to; the official who permits a variation from it should be sent to jail. Every transaction of the officials and the directors must be done in broad daylight; contracts with subsidiary corporations must be published; the bookkeeping must be prescribed by the state, and any attempt to conceal the facts which the public has a right to know should be punished as a crime.

The fact being established that the railway is the servant of the people and not their master, it follows that it must submit to a searching supervision and a stringent regulation of all its business by the state. The first duty of the government is to see that this enormous power is not employed for the subversion of the industrial freedom of the people. The Federal Government must take the lead in these reforms, but it will be needful also that the States should supplement the Federal legislation by strengthening the powers of the State commissions, and by providing statutes that shall bring the commerce within the State into line with the inter-State regulations.

Any director or official found speculating in the stock of his own railroad should be sent to prison.

Some plan should be prescribed by law

whereby minorities of stockholders may obtain representation in boards of directors.

Fares as well as freights should be made absolutely uniform, and the granting of passes or half-rate tickets or favors of any kind should be severely punished.

It would be well if every State would follow the example of California, and decree that any State officer who accepts a pass or gratuity of any kind from a railway corporation thereby forfeits his office.

In short, the state must enforce upon railways a method of administration which shall permit no discriminations or favors to anybody, but shall guarantee and secure the equal industrial freedom of the whole people. The state has no right to discriminate among its citizens, granting favors to some at the expense of others; and the state must not permit the corporations which it calls into being for public service, to do any such thing. If the state cannot prevent this, the end of free government is not to be predicted; it is here already.

We shall not stop with these vigorous measures; we shall go farther, as I have said; government ownership and control of the machinery of transportation is the only logical solution of the problem. Government management may be a long way off; it may be sufficient for the people to own the tracks and to lease them, for

limited terms, to operating syndicates, the government prescribing the rates, and supervising the business, but leaving the conduct of it to private enterprise. This may seem a vast undertaking, and it is; but we have some large contracts on hand in the next fifty years, if we are going to govern this country; and we may as well be getting ready for them. The way to begin, no doubt, is to take up at once some such reforms as I have indicated. Yet even upon the threshold of this enterprise we hesitate. What hinders the state from undertaking these reforms?

I will tell you some of the hindrances. What is the state? It is you and I and quite a number of other people, some better and some no better than we are. And you and I, mayhap, have had very dim notions about this whole matter,—I can speak for myself, if not for you,—and, as a consequence, have had relations of one sort or another with the railroads which have prevented us from acting independently in the matter. Perhaps we have been asking for passes, or clerical orders, or special rates. We have done it because everybody else did it; we have thought but little about it. If we thought at all, we assumed that the railway was a private corporation, and that we had a right to take any favors that it chose to give, or to make as good

a bargain as we could with its managers. Complications of this nature have hindered some of us from seeing the matter clearly. For one, I confess, with some shame, that until seven or eight years ago, I always accepted clerical orders from railway companies without much thought. The time came when I was compelled to do considerable thinking about it, and the matter became very plain to me. The railroad company has no right to extend to me any such favors. The Inter-State Commerce bill may allow it, but that does not make it right. The railroad company is bound to render an equal public service to all the people. It must not discriminate. It is not the business of the railroad to promote religion or charity by showing special favors to the representatives of either. It is bound, because it is a public servant, to treat all men alike. What it has no right to give me, I have no right to take, and for several years I have not taken it; I pay the regular fare as all my neighbors do or ought to do.

It is partly because many people, and among them leaders of public opinion, legislators especially, judges even, have been receiving, in one way or another, favors from the railroads, that the movement of public opinion toward the reassertion of the supremacy of the state over the railroads has been somewhat tardy.

But there is another, and perhaps a stronger reason. Those who have most clearly seen the need of the intervention of the state have hesitated to call for it, because they have not felt confident that the kind of men who find their way into legislatures and congresses could be safely trusted to deal with a matter so delicate and arduous. It is a great problem; it calls for statesmanship of the highest order; it involves the deepest questions of finance and economics and constitutional law; it can only be wisely handled by men who are temperate and just and invulnerable by blandishments or bribes. We want no spoliation of railway properties, no crippling by vexatious and spiteful legislation of railway enterprises. We must control this giant among the Social Forces, but we must do it without overturning the social order or undermining the securities of honest property. The great changes that are to be made must be approached tentatively and with moderation. And it is not at all clear that the people who generally represent us at Washington or at the State capitals possess either the mental or the moral qualifications for a labor so vast. Yet the labor must be undertaken. The mighty problem must be solved. Industrial freedom, political purity, public virtue all depend for their very existence upon the power of the people to control by wise and firm legislation

the railway corporations of this country. Is it not evident that our first duty is to see to it that the men who represent us are men of broad wisdom and stainless integrity? Such men can be found; we must find them, and lay our commands upon them, and make them serve us. We must have, for the solution of this tremendous question, the clearest intelligence, the ripest experience, the loftiest patriotism of the country. We must not let the political machinists pick out the men who are to deal with these vital interests.

We have come to a period in the history of this nation when great questions confront us. The development of our country, the growth of our population, the appearance of vast combinations of capital, are silently revolutionizing the social order. It is a time for sober thinking, for frank speaking, for independent and courageous conduct. I think that the duties which all conscientious and patriotic men owe to this nation at this hour are duties more sacred, more solemn, more awful, than citizens of any country ever owed before to their fatherland. It seems to me that the destinies that we are determining to-day, by our action or our inaction, are the destinies of hundreds of millions of the human race for centuries of time. God help us to be wise, and sober, and faithful to the solemn charge that he has given us to keep!





## V

### THE CITY

WE are now to study the city as a social fact, the influence of the city upon society. By the city I shall generally mean the municipality, the civic corporation, the association of citizens for the maintenance of law and order and the promotion of the welfare of the civic community. It is the city as a social fact, rather than as a physical or commercial fact, that we are to consider; economic problems will interest us in this as in the other studies only as they have some direct bearing on the higher interests of the community.

The rapid growth of cities during the century now closing is a notable phenomenon. It may have been supposed that the experience of the United States is exceptional in this respect, but it is not; the old cities of Europe have been growing about as fast as the new cities of this continent. How shall we explain this phenomenon ?

The fundamental fact is, I believe, that men are growing more social. They like to be together; they need one another; as they rise in the scale of civilization, the development of their higher nature, the enlargement of their sympathies, draw them into closer fellowship. The nearer perfection a human being comes, the more he needs human companionship; indeed it is only through human companionship that he reaches perfection. All the royal virtues are social virtues. The word that fulfils the whole law is love. The troglodyte may gnaw his bone in the solitude of his cave, but the fully developed man finds his highest pleasures in society.

"If man is to become rational," says Mr. Mackenzie, "he must make for himself a rational environment. This environment he finds for himself in society. . . . 'Man is by nature a social animal'—*φύσει πολιτικὸν ζῶον*—partly, of course, for the reason that makes cattle gregarious, for the simple preservation of life itself, but chiefly because man is a progressive being, struggling upward toward a higher life than that of sense, and cannot secure the means for such a progress except by a certain objective embodiment of his ideal."<sup>1</sup>

This is the deepest reason for the growth of

<sup>1</sup> *Introduction to Social Philosophy*, p. 180.

cities. It is primarily the divine element in humanity which makes men draw together. The nearer they come to the stature of a perfect manhood, the stronger will be the social tendency. The vision of the Apocalypse which shows us the glorified humanity dwelling in a city is a true insight.

Lesser and lower causes are also at work. The improvement of farm machinery and of transportation facilities greatly reduces the necessary number of those who till the soil and bear its produce to market ; and the wonderful development of the mechanical arts and inventions has enormously increased the demand for labor in those industries which are best prosecuted in close populations. As production improves there is far more of wealth to distribute, and the centres of distribution multiply and increase.

To other causes less normal and beneficent the rapid growth of American cities is due. The destructive railway competitions, which we studied in the last chapter, by which advantages wholly factitious have been given to industries at the competitive points, have caused the cities to grow at an unhealthy rate, at the expense of the country. This unnatural stimulation of urban growth must result in frequent reactions and depressions; the social evils of city life spring, in part, from this

cause. And, finally, the migration to the city of the thriftless and dependent classes who are encouraged to believe that they can get a good part of their living by appealing to the sympathies of the charitable, constitutes a considerable element in the growth of all American cities. There is small chance for these people in the country where everybody knows them, and where there is little surplus wealth; but the city furnishes an ample field for their peculiar industry.

Such are some of the causes that are at work to hasten the growth of our cities. It is evident that the city is becoming a more and more important factor in our national life. In Scotland Mr. Shaw tells us that there are now three townspeople to one who dwells in the country; and in England seventy-two per cent. of the population live in urban sanitary districts, while only twenty-eight per cent. live in the rural districts. In our own country the conditions are less marked, for something less than one third of our people live in cities of over eight thousand population; if, however, the villages were all counted, it is probable that the majority would be found in the urban districts. Considering as rural populations those who dwell on the farms and in places numbering less than one thousand, it appears that out of the entire addition to the population of the

country in the last decade—amounting to nearly twelve and a half millions—only a little more than four millions were added to the rural population, while more than eight millions were added to the number of those who live in cities and villages. While, therefore, considerable time may elapse before we reach the conditions that prevail in England and Scotland, it is evident that we are travelling that way. The problem of the city is becoming for America an urgent problem.

Urgent, but by no means insoluble. There are no such problems. The one fundamental human fact is that what ought to be done can be done. Our ideals do not mock us; they are the invitation of that Power not ourselves which is able to do for us exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think. The regeneration of the city is a mighty task, but there is mighty power wherewith to work, if we only know how to use it. Listen to these strong words of one who understands the problem of the city better than any man in this country, Dr. Albert Shaw:

“Are the magnificent activities and material achievements of our century an evil thing? It is a false, unhealthy philosophy that so characterizes them. They are to be the basis of a high and widely diffused civilization. These activities have populated cities and industrial towns, and in the

sudden, haphazard, fortuitous concourse there have been serious evils. But cannot the same energy that has won great achievements on the field of production solve the problems that have sprung up in the wake of these achievements, when once it fairly grapples with them? Modern society, having learned how to produce abundantly, can also find out a way to distribute the product equitably, and to overcome the ills of irresponsible private wealth and undeserved poverty. And modern production having stimulated the increase of population and massed it in cities, can it be so great an evil that men must live where it is ordered that they must work? Those whose circumstances permit a free choice of environment are not primarily concerned. But the cardinal fact remains that the majority of families must henceforth, in increasing areas of the earth, live under urban conditions. Those conditions since the opening of the new industrial era have been upon the whole vicious. They must be so improved that for the average family the life of the town shall not, perforce, be detrimental. The race must not decay in city tenements, but somehow it must, under these conditions of dense neighborhood, find a higher and better life. Infection, disease, a high death rate, must surrender to the science of public sanitation, so that the health of children and the longevity of the mature shall be better assured in the town than in the country, urban death rates falling below those of the nation at large. The moral and educational environment must be made such as to produce the best results

and to preserve the virtue, intelligence, industrial capacity and physical stamina of the race." <sup>1</sup>

As Dr. Shaw has so clearly shown us, most of the great European cities, both in Great Britain and on the Continent, are making magnificent advances along this line; and what can be done by those whom we are sometimes pleased to call the effete populations of the old world, cannot surely be beyond the power of the civic enterprise of America.

The regeneration of the municipality is our task. And what do we mean by the municipality? It is that civic organization by which the people co-operate for mutual protection, for security, and for the promotion of the common welfare. In a legal point of view it is a corporation, chartered by the State to have the care of the local interests of the community. Of this corporation every native or naturalized male citizen over twenty-one years of age is a member. The functions and powers of this corporation are carefully defined in the charter, which is the organic law of the city. The work of the corporation is entrusted to officers chosen by the people themselves, representing them and responsible to them. Let us glance at some of the interests committed to their charge.

The city, by its officers, is to determine the

<sup>1</sup> *Municipal Government in Great Britain*, p. 9.

physical configuration of the territory entrusted to its care, the location, width, and grade of the streets and alleys, the nature of the pavements, the whole character of the avenues of communication by which the city is traversed, and along which the population is distributed. It is to regulate, in the interests of safety, the character of the buildings erected upon these avenues; it is to provide for all the people protection from fire; it is to control the business of furnishing water and light to the homes and the workshops of the people; it is to provide a system of sewerage, by which the refuse of the community may be safely borne away; it is to see that the streets are cleaned, that no nuisances are permitted, that sanitary conditions are everywhere secured; it is to make and enforce ordinances for the order and peace of the community, and for the restraint of those who obstruct or assail the public welfare; it is charged with the duty of enforcing, within its borders, the laws of the State against actual or intending criminals; it is to regulate traffic and amusements in the interest of order and peace and decency; it is to furnish markets and parks and playgrounds for the people; it is to provide a system of free public education in which all the children of the people, rich and poor, may receive adequate training for the duties of citizenship; it is to take care of the poor within



its gates, and to deal sagaciously and firmly with all those who are sinking into dependence; it is to be the corporate embodiment and expression, in all matters of public concernment, of the intelligence, the thrift, the social enterprise, the justice, the honor, the philanthropy of a law-abiding community.

What a magnificent work it is which is thus entrusted to that corporate body which we call the municipality! What splendid intelligence it demands, what wide and ample experience it invokes, what bold but firm leadership, what comprehensive knowledge of the conditions of well-being, what a sense of the true values of human life, what a conscientious purpose to set the interests of the community above the interests of individuals or of factions! The work to which this civic corporation thus stands pledged is the highest and noblest kind of work of which it is possible for human beings to conceive. Corporations are organized for definite purposes, —one to make plows, another to do a banking business, another to teach religion, another to care for the sick and the infirm, another to promote art and another education,—but the civic corporation is organized for the higher and more comprehensive purpose of promoting the convenience, the comfort, the safety, the happiness, the welfare, of the whole people.

When I say that the municipality is pledged

to these high aims, I mean not merely that there is some abstract impersonal entity which is thus obligated, but that those representatives of the people who occupy the municipal office at this moment—all who are in the employ of the city—from the mayor down to the scavenger, have this for their primary obligation. When they accept service under the municipality this obligation is assumed. Service under the municipality means all this, and can mean nothing else. The men who are put into these responsible places are there to study and promote the public welfare. Some provision is made by the city for their support—or for the support of some of them—while they are engaged in this public service, but the stipend is incidental; the man to whom it is the primary concern is disqualified by that fact.

The greatness of the opportunity which is offered to those who are called to this service can hardly be exaggerated. The conditions of urban life throw upon the municipality great and constantly increasing tasks. The scope of city government must needs be far more comprehensive than that of the government of the State or of the nation. Comparatively few of the interests of our daily lives are directly and consciously touched by our State government or our Federal government, but the city enters into active partnership with us in a great many

of our labors and our pleasures. Some political philosophers have disputed whether that clause in the preamble of our national Constitution which makes it the duty of the government to provide for the general welfare is not an error; whether, indeed, governments have any other than police functions. But whatever may be said about the national government, few thinkers of this day doubt that the city government has a great deal to do besides keeping the peace. It is indeed, a stupendous enterprise in the way of co-operative industry. Whatever we may think about it, it is plain that the principle of what is known as collectivism must increasingly prevail in municipal governments. The people have already found out that many things can be done by them co-operatively, through the municipality, far more advantageously than by competitive or private enterprise. They are going to find out that a good many more things can be done in this way with still greater advantage. This tendency is called socialistic; I do not care what you call it; it is the inevitable result of living together in civilized society. We must combine more and more and compete less and less; life is not possible to us on any other terms. But the economic reasons for such co-operation are quite as strong as the ethical reasons. We shall co-operate more and more,

through our city governments, because by this enlarged co-operation we may provide for ourselves so much better conditions of life. The principle of association permits of very great cheapening in many of the ordinary needs of human beings. You all know how very cheaply and perfectly our needs of communication are now served through the Post Office; and the improved processes of production in many industries, when they can be conducted on a large scale, greatly lighten the cost of living. The experience of the Familistere at Guise in France, shows how low may be the cost of house-room to the people when a great multitude combine to provide it. I have no doubt that there are methods of co-operative house-keeping by which the comfort of our families could be doubled in many respects and the costs divided. Into the supply of these domestic needs, I do not think that the municipality is likely to go very soon; I instance them only as a hint of the economies of association. And I have no doubt that the municipality does now offer to the people a means of combination by which several of their daily expenses could be and should be greatly reduced. The water which most municipalities bring to the doors of their citizens is one of the greatest of blessings, and its cost, through the co-operation of the people, even in our corrupt systems, is very

light. By the same method, the light and the transportation of the people could be greatly cheapened. When these industries are managed by the people themselves, for their own benefit, the cost of the service is greatly reduced. The dwellers in most English cities get their gas for from sixty to seventy cents a thousand feet, and out of this price, paid by private consumers, the streets are lighted, the plant constantly improved and extended, and large sums carried every year to the sinking funds which provide for the extinction of the debt. In the street-car service, likewise, the average ride does not cost the British citizen more than two or three cents, and out of this the cities get annual revenues of hundreds of thousands of dollars. The experience of many European cities proves that it is possible to put these common conveniences of life at a price far below what Americans are now compelled to pay, and still make them sources of municipal revenue. This is what will always happen when civic corporations manage all these matters with a single eye to the public good. When for such a service as lighting or transportation you have a whole city for your market, with a complete monopoly, the possibilities of cheapening production are vast; and if all the people share the benefits the cost of living can be greatly reduced. Many of those

businesses which are necessary to the life of the city are businesses which conform to what the economists call the law of increasing returns, which means that they will always be monopolies; and if the municipality controls them, in the interest of all the people, the increasing returns inure to the benefit of all the people; the service can be constantly cheapened and the means of comfort and happiness made more accessible to all. All this, I say, the city should be able to secure for its citizens; or rather this is what the citizens when they have learned how to co-operate for the highest ends, will be able to secure for themselves. The civic corporation is the instrument by which these stores of economic good will be gathered and distributed. When the city is what it ought to be, the cost of living in it will be vastly less than it could be in the country. I am inclined to think that it is so to-day; that we must pay for the same or equal comforts and conveniences and means of enjoyment more in the country than in the city. But if all the great municipal industries, which are practical monopolies, were managed as they ought to be by the municipality, purely for the common good, the means of livelihood and enjoyment would be far more accessible than they are now.

Then, as to the health of the city, if the municipality were managed as it should be, by

men of the highest scientific attainment and the greatest executive ability, how favorable the conditions might be made! If the water were abundant and cheap and pure; if the sewerage were perfect; if the streets were kept clean; if all nuisances were abolished; if high standards of cleanliness were enforced upon all—(and the city has a perfect right to enforce such standards; on the basis of sheer individualism I have a right to demand that my neighbor shall not endanger my life or disturb my comfort by filth or indecency;)—if all this is rigidly insisted on by the municipality, the causes of disease may be greatly lessened. I believe that the day will come when the health of the people in the cities will be much better than that of the people in the country. Indeed, that day has already come in some of the great European cities. In Amsterdam and the Hague, two cities of the Low Countries, where the difficulties of drainage and sanitation would seem to be exceptionally great, the death rate to-day is lower than that of the whole country of Holland, being, for 1894, only 18.6 per thousand in the former city and 16.9 in the latter. Most of those European cities in which the conscience and intelligence of the community are well represented in the government, show a rapid recent decrease in the death rate. In Birmingham, within a few years, the rate

was reduced from about twenty-six per thousand to twenty or less, which means the saving of two thousand to two thousand five hundred lives a year. In London, during the first half of the century, the death-rate was about thirty and it is now about twenty.

“This means,” says Dr. Shaw, “in a population of 5,000,000, the saving of 50,000 lives a year. It means, of course, the prevention of a vastly greater number of cases of sickness, a marked increase in the average duration of human life, and an important conservation of the physical strength and wealth-producing energy of the people.”<sup>1</sup>

What an amazing power has the municipality, rightly administered, to promote the well-being of the people!

Something more than health is involved in the problem of the slums. What shall the city do with the slums? It must abolish them utterly. “The abolition of the slums, and the destruction of their virus,” says Dr. Albert Shaw, “are as feasible as the drainage of a swamp and the total dissipation of its miasmas.” As feasible, let me say, and as imperative. Power to do a thing like this is the obligation to do it. The fact that the disease and the pestilence which these conditions breed are moral as well as physical in no wise lessens our

<sup>1</sup> *Municipal Government in Great Britain*, p. 303.



responsibility for getting rid of them. There are a good many quarters in many of our modern cities where pauperism and crime are produced as inevitably as carrion is produced when an unburied carcass is exposed to the summer sun. Men and women cannot live upright, self-respecting, decent lives in such places. The social life that is lived there must be rife with moral miasm; the city should have precisely the same right to abate such a curse that it has to drain a morass. Individuals ought to have no property right in premises which breed death and engender vice. When they have proved that they lack the power to keep their property from falling into such conditions, their property must be summarily taken away from them. The existence of such plague spots, here and there, in our American cities, is proof that the municipality is fatally derelict in its duty. If there are legal difficulties in the way of summary procedure against evils of this nature, it is high time that our statutes and our legal interpretation of them, were made to conform to the facts of the case. *Salus populi est suprema lex.* The law whose outcome is public detriment is honored more in the breach than in the observance.

Power to abolish slums is not unknown to modern cities. All the great British towns have already thoroughly purged large areas of

squalor and misery. When the proper authorities report a certain district as a nuisance, the London County Council at once proceeds to condemn the whole of it. Parliament gives the Council this power. Proprietors are paid, of course, for their property, but no more than it is actually worth in the conditions into which they have permitted it to fall. Then the city proceeds to raze these rookeries to the earth, laying out the district anew, widening the streets and the air spaces and erecting model tenements, of which it becomes the owner and the landlord. Quite a number of the people of London are now living in health and decency in houses owned and rented by the city, which stand upon ground where not long ago the deadliest slums were festering. One needs only to pass from some of the existing slums of that metropolis (for they are not yet all abolished) to the districts regenerated, observing the marvellously changed conditions, and the difference in the very physique and expression of the people inhabiting the different sections, to be made aware of how much it is possible for a great and wisely governed municipality to do in working out its own salvation.

Closely connected with this is the provision of baths for the people. Glasgow has five large public bathing establishments, which have cost the city \$600,000. Swimming baths, which are

kept open winter and summer, at a uniform temperature, and are in the care of competent swimming masters, are open to the public at the charge of two pence each. There are also private baths, at a little higher cost, and there are special rates for school children. An average of fifteen hundred persons a day avail themselves of this decency, and enjoy this luxury. Other British cities have similar conveniences. In Manchester there are eight such public baths, costing about \$100,000 each. In Birmingham there are four, patronized by four hundred thousand bathers every year. School children use the splendid swimming baths of Birmingham for a half-penny. Turkish baths, also, provided by the city, cost twenty-five cents each.

“It is not attempted,” says Dr. Shaw, “to make these establishments fully self-sustaining. The running expenses of the system are more than \$35,000 a year, and the receipts from bathers are less than \$30,000. The city, moreover, has interest to pay on an investment of \$350,000. But when the benefits to school children alone,—not to mention the hosts of young working men and women—are considered, the net charge against the rates is a trifling matter for a rich city of half a million people.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Municipal Government in Great Britain*, p. 187.

Glasgow has found still another way of ministering to the common welfare of the poorest people by her system of wash-houses, provided by the municipality.

“For the trifling sum of twopence an hour a woman is allowed the use of a stall containing an improved steam-boiling arrangement and fixed tubs with hot and cold water faucets. The washing being quickly done, the clothes are deposited for two or three minutes in one of a row of centrifugal machine driers, after which they are hung on one of a series of sliding-frames which retreat into a hot-air apartment. If she wishes, the housewife may then use a large roller-mangle, operated, like the rest of the machinery, by steam-power; and she may, at the end of the hour, go home with her basket of clothes, washed, dried, and ironed. To appreciate the convenience of all this, it must be remembered that the woman probably lives with her family in one small room of an upper tenement flat. The number of washings done in these houses increased from 76,718 in the year 1885-6 to 155,221 in the year 1890-91, and unquestionably the patronage is destined to have a very large future growth.”<sup>1</sup>

The city corporation should have the power not only to cleanse the slums, but also to provide parks and playgrounds for the people.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 109.

Open spaces with green grass and shrubbery and flowers ought to be within easy reach of all the people. Such contact with nature is one of the necessities of life. Human beings to whom it is denied are robbed of their birth-right. The humanizing influence that comes from "green things growing" is essential to the right development of character. But under the conditions which prevail in urban life it is only a few of the more fortunate who can provide themselves with such surroundings. If the multitude are to have any experience of these salutary influences, it must be through provisions made by the people for the people. Here also the principal of association may work beneficent wonders. It is quite possible for a benign municipality to make this provision for the people. The great parks on the outskirts of the city are useful, of course; but what Dr. Shaw says that Paris has been striving after, in the later years, is what all enlightened civic administrations will chiefly care for, "the multiplication of small parks and playgrounds in the poorest and densest quarters of the city." Listen to these words also:

"Most of the municipal parks, squares, gardens, and playgrounds of German cities are small, but they are quite numerous and well distributed. Berlin has about eighty; Hamburg has more than

sixty ; Munich, forty-four ; Dresden, thirty-five ; Cologne, thirty-two ; Nuremberg, thirty-one ; Breslau, twenty-eight ; Frankfort, twenty-five ; Chemnitz, twenty-four ; Stuttgart, nineteen ; Leipsic, eighteen, and so on. I should be glad to devote some space to the varied means employed by German cities for the encouragement of harmless recreation, and for the promotion of physical culture. But it is enough to say that the German municipality with its conception of responsibility for the sum total of the well-being of its people, does not disregard the fact that recreation is a necessity, and that in crowded cities the subject is not one to be left wholly to personal choice or private management.”<sup>1</sup>

It cannot wisely be left to such management in any great city. The morality of the people of the cities is, as Professor Patten has said, a morality less connected with labor than with play—

“the morality of temptation rather than of danger ; the morality of leisure rather than of work. If city civilizations could control the pleasures, amusements, and temptations of the people, there would be little difficulty in regulating their activities during the working period. Even the lack of industrial efficiency is largely due to the evils of leisure.”

<sup>1</sup> *Municipal Government in Europe*, p. 374.

The municipality which is intelligently managed will therefore make large and wise provision for the recreations of the people. In Paris, the city employs a number of directors of sports, and Dr. Shaw tells us that

“on holidays in the parks and playgrounds the young Parisians are now being officially inducted into the kinds of outdoor games and exercises that only a few years ago they knew so little about. Every year the City Council votes a handsome sum of money to pay for the management of school vacation trips into the country ; and an important system of school camps and colonies has been established, its object being to send a large number of sickly children of the working class into the country in summer.”<sup>1</sup>

What is done by many European cities in the way of providing music of the finest quality, —free open-air concerts in the parks and gardens in the summer, and concerts at a very low admission fee in the public assembly rooms in winter, is also a great and beneficent ministration. Such a service as this can be rendered by the civic corporation to the whole people at a small cost ; and its influence in elevating the tastes of the people and in counteracting the tendencies to vulgarity and dissipation and immorality must be considerable.

<sup>1</sup> *Municipal Government in Europe*, p. 124.

Fine collections of art, open every day in the week to the poorest citizens, work in the same way. One who has followed the working man in his blouse, or the little company of plainly dressed schoolgirls through the great galleries of the Louvre, or the National Gallery on Trafalgar Square, marking their interest and listening to their comments, will have some comprehension of what a city can do for the cultivation and the enjoyment of its poorest citizens.

As to libraries, there is little need of awakening American enthusiasm; here, at least, is one interest for which a great many of our own cities have striven to make provision.

With respect to schools, also, there has been no lack of liberality on the part of American municipalities; this provision for the general welfare the people have insisted on, and munificently has it been furnished. There is reason, indeed, to doubt whether the funds so liberally provided are always wisely administered; whether the average American school board represents, as it surely should, the highest intelligence and the finest character of the city. But it is probable that American municipalities generally deserve less reproach for shortcomings in this department of their work than in almost any other.

Whether the great business of caring for the outdoor poor should be entrusted to the civic



corporation or not is a question of some importance. Beyond a doubt the city must furnish hospitals and infirmaries for those who have become helpless: whether it should also undertake to give assistance to those in temporary distress is not so clear. Many of us, who are familiar with the way this work is done in most American cities, have been inclined to say that all this kind of charity should be left to private organizations. But if anyone will read what Dr. Shaw has to say about the care of the poor in Paris, and especially in the German cities, he will be able to see that the heart of a great city may be most wonderfully kind,—and he may find himself in some doubt whether, after all, the civic corporation will not be, in the millenium, the almoner of all the charities. In Berlin, for example, the poor of the city are under the care of a strong department of the city government, at the head of which is a magistrate, and connected with which are several specialists and counsellors. The city is then divided into two hundred and fifty districts, over each of which is placed a committee, of from five to twelve members, one of whom is a physician designated by the city government, and one of whom is a member of the city council.

“To be designated,” says Dr. Shaw, “a member

of one of these local committees for the relief of the poor is regarded as a mark of respect and is esteemed a substantial honor. It shows that a man has good standing with his neighbors, and also that he possesses the confidence and regard of the ruling authorities of Berlin. No man would dream of refusing to serve on such a committee. It is held to be one of the most sacred duties of citizenship. Moreover, the acceptance of the trust is obligatory, refusal carrying with it the penalty of increased taxes, and, under certain circumstances, a suspension of civil and political privileges. No remuneration is attached to these appointments, and the duties connected with them are far from nominal and may not be shirked. Each district is subdivided so that every citizen member of the local committee is made responsible for a certain number of families and houses. He is expected to know the condition of his little parish. He is fully authorized to administer prompt relief in pressing cases, and is under obligation to examine thoroughly into all cases which require continued assistance. The entire local committee assembles at regular times for full report and discussion upon the condition of the district; and reports are carried to the central municipal office from all the neighborhoods. Every new member of the local committee is carefully instructed as to the scope of his duties and the range of his discretion, and inasmuch as appointments are made with great care, the average of efficiency among these visitors is very high indeed. There are between two and three thousand

citizens who thus serve the Berlin municipality in conjunction with the regularly salaried officials. Many of them have acted in this capacity as friend, neighbor, and helper of the poor for a long period of years. Every householder fully understands the system, and every family in distress knows exactly to whom to apply for relief. The whole system rests upon the belief that the community is a great family, which is bound to intervene for the prompt help of those who are rendered unable through misfortune to help themselves ; and there is no loss of self-respect in accepting aid at the hands of a permanent local committee made up of good-Samaritan neighbors. Each committee has at hand every needed appliance for the prompt summoning of assistance, medical and otherwise. The organization of relief is so complete as to make cases of fraud practically impossible ; and duplication of relief is a thing of the past in Germany.”<sup>1</sup>

I must not try to carry farther this outline of the kind of work that a civic corporation, acting for the citizens, may do to make life worth living in a great city. And such work as I have described is not only conceivable, it is imperative. The people of no city have any right to be satisfied with their corporate life until it is accomplishing all these things. Nor is this any visionary scheme ; for all that I have described is in actual operation to-day

<sup>1</sup> *Municipal Government in Europe*, pp. 366-368.

upon this planet. It is idle to say that such things are impossible, for people whom most Americans consider vastly inferior to themselves in every respect, are doing these very things continually.

There is one service that the civic corporation, when it bears this character, would render to the whole people, of which I have not spoken, but which must not be overlooked. Such a sagacious and statesmanlike administration of common interests would greatly increase our comfort and our happiness, but it would do something even better than this; it would be a constant manifestation of integrity and honor and civic patriotism. Suppose it could be said of a city council, as was said without contradiction of the first London County Council, at the end of three years of work, that "through all the years of administrative labors, as complex and confusing as ever fell to any governing body in the world, not one breath of scandal, no shadow of a shade of personal corruption, has attached to any single member"—what an object lesson that would be to all the people who live in the city! How certainly would the maxims and methods of private business be cleansed and elevated by this great example; what a standard would be lifted up before our youth, of fidelity to trusts, of high integrity, of unselfish service! Can anyone

conceive of a social force more powerful for the purification of public morals, for the invigoration of character among the people than a city government consisting of able and honorable men working together unselfishly for the public good ?

It is rather dispiriting to turn from this contemplation of what a civic corporation might be, to the dismal reality which confronts us in most American cities. I will not detain you long to look on the reverse of this picture ; my work has been very clumsily done if you have not seen, in the background of this sketch, the type of the city government with which we are too familiar. As a rule, the civic corporation in America is not the choice of the people ; it is the creation of some small section of the community which makes a business of politics. No sweeping statements ought to be made concerning the character of the men in the municipal offices : very reputable men are sometimes found in these places. Quite often, in a spurt of civic patriotism, an American city manages to elect a good mayor ; but this zeal for reform does not generally hold out long enough to cleanse the council chamber. If the people who hold these offices are not always boodlers, they are too apt to be men who intend to use such patronage as they can control to build up a personal machine for themselves,

and the one type of corruptionist is about as bad as the other.

When a city corporation is composed mainly of men of this character, the vast power which it possesses will of course be exerted to oppress, to despoil, to rob and impoverish the citizens. These officials are here for their own aggrandizement in one way or another, and the opportunities are ample. Every new street opened, every pavement laid down, every sewer dug, every building site secured, every public building erected, every contract for supplies of any sort, every franchise asked for by a lighting or transportation company is an opportunity of gainful traffic, and bargains are often made in secret by which the public treasury is robbed, and powers are granted to corporations of levying heavy tribute upon the city for years to come.

The civic corporation in America, in a vast number of cases, is an instrument employed not primarily for the promotion of the public welfare, but for plundering citizens and enriching officials. The people in office, large numbers of them, are wholly incapable of performing the high and responsible work which they have assumed; they have neither the experience, nor the business sense, nor the technical knowledge required. One who is compelled in the way of duty frequently to

visit the city hall in Chicago told me that the great wonder was that the machinery kept going—that it did not break down and stop; for almost nobody could be found who had any definite knowledge about the work of his own department. And many of those who have some wit and skill employ most of it not in promoting the public welfare, but in contriving ways of levying tribute upon the taxpayers.

So it is that this great political organism, to which enormous power is and must be entrusted, becomes in so many cases an engine of extortion and oppression. The public health is sacrificed through defective drainage, and uncleansed streets and impure water; the slums that breed physical and moral pestilence are left untouched; all the manifold beneficent provision that the city might make for the welfare of its citizens is neglected; for even supposing that these people could conceive of such beneficence who would entrust them with the means of realizing it? Evidently, so long as the kind of men are in control of our city governments whom we are now wont to see in power, the fewer the functions we commit to them the better. So long as the civic corporation consists of people who buy school sites for more than the owners ask for them and sell the most precious franchises for a song, it is idle to

think of realizing for ourselves, through the medium of the city, those beautiful gains of civilization of which we have been thinking.

Not only must we suffer all this extortion and forego all these benefits, we must also live all our lives in the presence of an influence whose power to undermine morality, to debauch the consciences of citizens, to lower the standards of business integrity and to pervert the judgment of the youth is insidious and deadly. I can think of few influences that would more effectively uplift and confirm social morality than that of a good city government; I can think of few that are more subversive of honor and character than that of a bad city government. When you have city officials who swear that they will respect and uphold the laws and then brazenly ignore and disobey them; officials who openly put the stamp of civic approval and endorsement upon conduct which the law sternly forbids and condignly punishes,—nay, officials who are known to be enriching themselves by selling to malefactors immunity and protection; when the city, which stands here as the vicegerent and representative of God to establish justice and righteousness, is known to be the ally and patron of lawbreakers, and the partner of thieves and robbers, when your council halls are the very vestibules of hell, do you not think that the



task of enforcing upon the young the principles of truth and honor and integrity is likely to be difficult ?

It is pitiful, it is tragical, to think of what a civic corporation may be,—of what, indeed, many civic corporations are, in other lands, to-day ; how wise, benignant, bountiful of good gifts to men, the custodian of the people's rights, the helper of their thrift, the servant of their wholesome pleasures, their friend in need, —to think of all this, and then to think of what the civic corporations are with which many of us are acquainted !

And what is the reason why the civic corporation as it exists in America to-day is so inefficient and so corrupt ? Many explanations may be offered, and indeed there are more reasons than one ; but there is one which so outranks all the others that I shall waste no breath upon the rest. It is simply this : we the people of the American cities do not prize good government enough to be willing to pay the necessary price for it. I am afraid that it is a little worse than this with some of us who consider ourselves pretty good people, who move in the best society and occupy pews in the most orthodox churches. I am afraid that there are some of us who really feel that we could not afford to have good government. Some of us are interested in franchises which could never have

been obtained from an honest government at the price we paid for them. Some of us would be a good deal troubled in our minds by the thought of the election of an honest assessor in our ward. A great many of those who are spoken of as belonging to the better classes are not, at the bottom of their hearts, hungering and thirsting for good government.

But where the case is not so bad as this, there is still, among the natural and proper leaders of our American communities, a decided unwillingness to assume the responsibilities which belong to them. What kind of men are needed to govern the city where you live? Certainly you need and must have your very best men, if you want good government. There is, probably, no business in your city which requires so high a degree of ability, of courage, of force, of integrity, as the business of the city itself requires. You may have some strong men among your citizens, but none who would not find exercise for all his knowledge and all his power in the administration of municipal affairs. I greatly doubt whether you have many men among you who know enough to discharge with credit the duties of several of your executive departments; you have some who could learn if they would set themselves about it. And you certainly have no men among your citizens too

wise, too dignified, too pure, too honorable, too busy, to serve the city as aldermen or councillors. Every city in the world that enjoys good government secures for its city council the services of its best men. In England, Scotland, France, Germany, Austria, when men of learning, of fame, of business experience, of scientific attainment, of high social standing, are summoned to take seats in the city councils, they promptly respond to the call: in America, with one consent, they flatly refuse. That is the simple explanation of the existing conditions.

We often hear men, on whom this service is urged, replying with some irritation that they cannot spare the time from their business. It would be just as seemly for a man to say that he could not leave his business to attend his daughter's bridal or his mother's funeral. There are few business engagements which the busiest citizen should not promptly leave when the city calls him to her service. If an army of invasion were marching upon the capital you would be ashamed to say that you could not leave your business to help in repelling the invader. A more powerful and more dangerous foe than any foreigner that ever landed on these shores is marching upon every capital in this land; is assaulting in overwhelming force the citadel of every one of our municipalities.

The powers of darkness, of misrule, of anarchy, are doing what they can, in these cities of ours, to cause government by the people, of the people, for the people, to perish from the earth. If anyone thinks that the danger is not dire and imminent, I pity his dulness. And the man who says that he is too busy to help in fighting these demons surely does not know what he is saying.

This battle for good government in our cities will not be won without a great deal of heroic, costly, consecrated service. It is because you and I have been so busy with our mills and our mines and our merchandise, with our selfish schemes and our trivial enjoyments and our narrow professionalisms, with writing briefs and mixing pills and expounding creeds and cramming paradigms, and have left our one main business of ruling the city in the fear of God to those who feared not God nor regarded man, that such a horror of great darkness rests now upon our cities. It will take a great deal more of toil and sacrifice to recover them out of the hands of the spoiler than it would have taken to keep them in clean hands from the beginning. But that toil and sacrifice is the price now demanded by the avenging Powers for the preservation of our liberties, and we must pay it, or suffer the loss of all on which our hearts are set.

“Our fathers,” says Professor Drummond, “made much of meetness for heaven. By prayer and fasting, by self-examination and meditation they sought to fit themselves ‘for the inheritance of the saints in light.’ Important beyond measure in their fitting place are these exercises of the soul. But whether alone they fit men for the inheritance of the saints depends on what a saint is. If a saint is a devotee and not a citizen, if Heaven is a cathedral and not a City, then these things do fit for heaven. But if life means action and action service ; if spiritual graces are acquired for use and not for ornament, the devotional forms have a deeper function. The Puritan preachers were wont to tell their people to ‘practise dying.’ Yes : but what is dying ? It is going to a City. And what is required of those who would go to a City. The practise of citizenship,—the due employment of the unselfish talents, the development of public spirit, the payment of the full tax to the great brotherhood, the subordination of personal aims to the common good. And where are these to be learned ? Here ; in Cities here. There is no other way to learn them. There is no Heaven to those who have not learned them.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The City without a Temple.*





## VI

### THE CHURCH

NEARLY everybody admits the existence of serious social disorders, and nearly everybody is trying to account for them. Let me try my hand at an explanation. They are due to a rapid and somewhat unhealthy development of the social organism. In uttering that sentence I have already exposed myself to the fire of the embattled sociologists; for one of the questions over which they are hotly disputing is whether there is any such thing as a social organism. I am not going to take any part in that *melée*; I will only say that the growth of society resembles in some respects the growth of a plant or an animal; and that is a statement which nobody can deny.

How, then, is every organism healthily developed? Through the co-ordinate processes of differentiation and integration.

A jelly fish is a living creature without apparent parts or organs—a seemingly indistinguishable mass of homogeneous matter. A man is a living being with a great many different parts and organs; his body is composed of many different kinds of substance, very differently arranged. In tracing the process of development from the lower to the higher orders we see that the principle of differentiation is constantly at work. Some power is there in the living thing—we will not undertake to tell what it is—which changes the structure of the protoplasm into many different forms, making bone and sinew and muscle and fat and lymph; metamorphosing the simple primitive material, so that substances shall be formed out of which heart and lungs and brain and eye and hands and all other parts and organs may be built up.

Nevertheless, in the process of development, the other principle of integration has been constantly at work. These groups of separated cells have been sent off by themselves to compose their special tissues and to do their special work, but they are not isolated: there is a bond of unity which holds them all together; they are blood relations, in very truth; their union to one another is vital; they are members one of another. That is a fact which in all their behavior they never fail to

manifest. There is no schism in the body. It has many members, but it is one body.

Now it is evident that a process somewhat like this is going on in society. In the primitive forms of industry there is not much variety of structure or of function. All the people know about the same things, do about the same things, have about the same possessions. There is no division of labor; there are no trades or professions; there are scarcely any varieties of capacity and station and service. And the progress of society consists largely in separating these people into groups, in giving them different kinds of work to do, in developing different powers, and different functions, and different types of character. This is the method of civilization.

It is not very many years since society in this country was quite homogeneous; the economical distinction between capitalist and laborer was not clearly marked, for most capitalists were laborers and most laborers were capitalists; the social distinction was not emphasized; there was really but one social class. But our material progress has given full scope to the principle of differentiation; the wage-workers are now distinctly marked off from employers and capitalists; labor itself has become highly specialized, and even the old mechanical trades are split into fractional parts



through the use of machinery ; industrial groups are numerous, separate, disparate ; the lines of social distinction are sharply drawn.

When the wheels of progress are whirling at such tremendous speed, the centrifugal force acts powerfully. Anyone can see that progress, under a competitive régime like ours, must tend to the separation of men, and to the creation of a great many diverse and apparently unrelated elements. Under this process men tend to become unsympathetic, jealous, antagonistic ; the social bond is weakened. The first condition of healthy competition is the mobility of labor, so they tell us : but the more mobile are the laboring masses, the less social do they become ; people move so often that there is not much neighborly affection. The feeling of a common interest which is the cement of the social order has largely disappeared from large sections of society.

All this is clear proof that the centrifugal forces have not been balanced, in our social cosmos, by the centripetal forces ; that social analysis has got the start of social synthesis. I am persuaded that Dr. Newman Smyth is right when he says that the evils which now threaten us in society are evils " which accompany the rapid differentiation of the complex elements and functions of modern life." Our material progress has been separating us into

industrial groups, and we have done far less than we ought to strengthen the bonds that could hold these groups together in spiritual and vital unity.

Perhaps this tendency to social disintegration has been strengthened, somewhat, by the scientific tendency, whose prevailing method is analysis. The thinking world has been largely occupied for the last century in taking things to pieces, in resolving everything into its elements. The old science wanted to know what things were for; the new science mainly inquires what things are made of. The scalpel and the retort are the weapons of its warfare. So far has this gone that conservative scientific men, like Professor Shailer, of Harvard University, are inclined to say that one who studies the life of animals anatomically can never understand the life of animals; that there is something even here which cannot be expressed in weights and measurements.

Medical science also has carried specialization to an extreme, as everybody knows; we have a doctor now for every organ and every tissue. But it begins to be evident, even to the specialists themselves, that no man can know the eye or the ear or the lungs or the nerves very well, who knows nothing else but eye or ear or lungs or nerves; that a good, all-round knowledge of the human system with all its functions

and maladies is necessary in order that a man may be a successful oculist or even dentist. "No man," said a very capable young specialist to me not long ago,— "no man who does not know enough to be a good general practitioner ought to undertake the treatment of the eye, and the experience which a man has gained in general practice is of great value to him in all special work." This may be evidence that analysis has been overdone even in some of our professional methods. But I allude to these phases of the subject only for the sake of pointing out the fact that the process of differentiation has gone to extremes in many directions. The social phenomenon we are studying is part of a general tendency.

Do not understand me to speak of this as an evil tendency; it is no more evil than the centrifugal motion of the planets is an evil tendency. That would be evil, no doubt, if it were not matched and balanced by the centripetal motion. If the one force were not harnessed with the other, we should soon have no solar system; each individual planet would go whirling off into the blackness of darkness. But the tendency is all good when its proper counterpoise is there; the co-ordination of the two gives us the music of the spheres. And this tendency to social differentiation is not evil, it is one of the elements of progress, if

only its proper counterpoise is present. It is a good thing to have society separated into industrial and social groups. It is a good thing to have knowledge specialized, so that each man may know a few things well. But this is only on condition that his knowledge be made serviceable to his fellows, and theirs to him. It would not be a good thing if each one knew only one thing, though he knew it ever so well, if nobody could share his knowledge with anybody else. What makes this special knowledge valuable is the spirit of community by which it is shared.

So it is a great gain to humanity to have industry specialized if the unity of the spirit is not broken in the process. But this calamity, unhappily, is precisely what we are suffering. The forces that divide and differentiate have not been balanced by the forces that unite and integrate. Therefore we are driving toward chaos. And nothing can keep us from wreck but a great reinforcement of the powers that make for unity. Social integration is the crying need of the hour. What can be done to bring these scattered, diverse, alienated, antipathetic groups of human beings into a real unity? How can all these competing tribes and clans, owners of capital, captains of industry, inventors, artisans, artists, farmers, miners, distributors, exchangers, teachers, and

all the rest, be made to understand that they are many members but one body; that an injury to one is really the concern of every other; that all for each and each for all is the only law of their common life ?

The work of social integration—the work of bringing all social groups and classes into a living unity—this, I say, is the great work of the hour. This mighty century, swiftly drawing to its close, and gathering up its splendid triumphs in the sciences that deal with matter and in the arts of construction and communication, waits wearily for some reconciling word that shall bring together the classes that are straining apart and threatening to become aliens and enemies. Is there no agency by which this work of unification can be wrought ? Has society provided itself with no means of realizing this unity which is the very condition of its existence ? Are there no forces, embodied in institutions, whose tendency it is to create and invigorate that consciousness of community out of which all coherent social construction must come ?

The State, we might be inclined to say, is such an agency. Surely a democratic State, in which all are endowed with political powers and responsibilities, whose patrimony is named a commonwealth, must be capable of creating and developing this consciousness of unity

among its people. And I am disposed to believe that the State, *if rightly conceived and administered*, would perform this service. The State, in the true conception of it, is the union of all for the common good. When that idea of it shall prevail we shall have a power of social integration at work which will be adequate to all our needs. But the common notion about the State is rather this, that it is an institute of rights; that it is a contrivance by means of which individuals have their persons protected and their possessions guaranteed. The emphasis is placed, in most of our political teaching, upon the benefits which individuals derive from their relation to the State. The theory that the State is mainly a police power is the prevailing theory, and it accentuates the antagonisms rather than the unities of society. The State is for protection, say some of the philosophers. It protects me against the wrongs and injuries which others may wish to inflict upon me; it protects me in the possession of that which I have produced by my labor. That is what it is for. All this tends to the conception that my interests are sharply discriminated from those of my neighbors; that the State is a mechanism for keeping men apart rather than for bringing them together. Each indeed gives up to the State some small portions of his liberties and possessions, but

this is only that he may hold with a firmer and more exclusive hand the goods and the powers that he has left.

I fear that our theories of a democratic State have largely taken some such shape as this, and if they have, it must be evident at once that the State, as thus conceived, does not furnish us with an adequate force of social integration.

Moreover, the existence of the State is mainly realized, by most citizens, through the machinery and methods of current politics; and one could hardly say that the tendencies to the unification of society are very strong in this realm. It is not in our political discussions and contests that men learn to feel that they are brethren. The partisan temper does not help toward social integration. The truly loyal partisan is bound to believe that half of his fellow citizens are the enemies of his country, and that they are seeking to undermine the very foundations of the social welfare.

And when we draw a little nearer to those who are actually administering the affairs of the State we find the sentiment prevailing that the State is not the union of all for the common good, but a contrivance whereby a few may profit at the expense of the rest. The spoils system rests on this conception, and I suppose that a large majority of the people in office throughout the country are sincere believers in

the spoils system. I do not think that this is true of the people at large; and yet the idea that the chief end of government is the well-being of the individual lays a foundation for this belief.

Furthermore, it must be confessed that things have so fallen out that great classes regard the State with suspicion as somehow inimical to their interest,—or, that they fear lest its intervention may become hostile to them. There are many capitalists, who are afraid that the State will be made an instrument of spoliation, and who have some reason to fear this; and there are certainly many laborers who believe that the State is in the hands of the capitalists and is administered for their oppression. These contrary beliefs cannot both be wholly true; but both may be partly true. I suppose that so long as the conception prevails that the function of the State is mainly a police function—the protection of some from the depredations of others—just such jealousies and suspicions as these will always be aroused by its administration. Classes whose interests are sharply discriminated will be equally suspicious of the power that arbitrates between them. The policeman is not likely to have the entire confidence and affection of all the people who live in a quarrelsome neighborhood, nor is it through his interposition,



mainly, that they are brought to dwell in peace and unity. And a State whose chief function is the police function cannot be depended on to perform that work of social integration which is the crying need of this hour. Let me say again that this conception of the chief function of the State is, to my mind, a wholly erroneous conception; that the State is something far higher and more godlike than this, and that if we could only invest it in our thought with its true divine character, we should need no other agency for the unification of society. But the State as now conceived and administered greatly fails of this high purpose. True it is, that in spite of these groveling theories it does often rise above its meaner self, and manifest the spiritual unity which we all desire to see; but great changes must take place in the prevailing political conceptions before much help can be looked for in this direction.

We have, however, in society, an agency which is expressly intended to perform this very service of social integration. You have been waiting for me to speak its name. It is the Christian Church. The precise business of the Christian Church is to fill the world with the spirit of unity, of brotherhood; to arrest and countervail those divisive and repulsive forces of which we have been speaking; to

promote the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace. The business of the Christian Church is to preach and realize here in the earth the Kingdom of Heaven; and the Kingdom of Heaven, ever since the angels first proclaimed it, has been known to be a kingdom of peace and good-will. The foundation of its fellowship is the royal law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," and the new commandment of our Lord, "That ye love one another as I have loved you." Who is my neighbor? He is any man in need whom you can reach and help; the fact that he is a Jew while you are a Samaritan; that he is an Armenian or an African or even an Englishman, while you are an American; that he is a Catholic while you are a Protestant, or a capitalist while you are a laborer, makes no difference at all; he is your brother; when you say, "Our Father which art in heaven," that word "our" throws your fraternal arm around him and draws him to your side; you do not pray at all, your prayer is meaningless, unless it takes him in, and wishes all good things for him as well as for yourself.

All this is of the very rudiments of the doctrine we profess when we call ourselves Christians. The Christian Church exists in the world for the realization of relations like these among men. To break down all barriers that keep

men apart; to demolish the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles,—ay, and between all jealous, hateful, warring nationalities; to realize a state of society in which there shall be no antipathies of race or rank, neither barbarian nor Scythian, neither bond nor free, neither aristocrat nor plebeian; to fulfil the prophecy which was made concerning our Master that “he should gather together in one the children of God that are scattered abroad,”—this is the mission of the Christian Church. The true integrating force in society is a spiritual force; it is the mind that was in Jesus; it is the spirit of Jesus Christ in the hearts of men. When this is present, in all its fullness and beauty, individualism loses its divisive power and becomes the servant of the community. And it is the mission of the Church of Christ to be the incarnation and manifestation of the life of Christ; to believe in it, to live it, to reveal it, to fill the world with those ministries of kindness and gentleness and helpfulness which the love of Christ inspires. This is the power—so far as I know it is the only power—by which these disintegrating and destructive influences can be counteracted, and the life of society preserved.

Is the Church accomplishing this mission? Manifestly it is not; for the very thing of which we are complaining is that the work of

social integration is not done. Yet we must be careful to do no injustice here. Ardent and strenuous souls, who discover the shortcomings of the Church, and deplore them, are quite too apt to overlook and belittle the work that she is actually doing. There has never been a time, since the days of the apostles, when the Church of Christ was not exerting a powerful influence in behalf of unity and brotherhood. To-day, in all the world, the Gospel that is read in its assemblies, the hymns that are sung, the prayers that are offered, set forth the duty of kindness, the beauty of fraternity, the blessedness of peace. No one can imagine what this world would be if this stream of sacred influence were not steadily poured into its turbid currents. Even in those congregations where there is most to deplore and censure, there is still a great deal done to check rapacity, and to make men think more kindly of their fellow men. The churches are doing a vast amount of practical charity—doing it in a quiet way, without sounding any trumpets in the streets—a far larger amount of this kind of work, in my judgment, than is done by all other agencies put together. And it is done in delicate and kindly ways, so that the recipients are neither humiliated nor pauperized by it. I hear the church berated, very often, by people who show, by their criticisms, that they have

not been inside of a church for twenty-five years and know no more of what it is about than if they lived in Jupiter. Still, after making all these concessions, the fact still remains that the Church has come far short of its high calling. It is doing, ordinarily, a great deal better work than the people who carp at it are doing ; but it is leaving undone a very large part of what it ought to do. In the apocalyptical visions the Church is called the Bride of Christ, the Wife of the Lamb ; and wife in our old Saxon is weaver—the weaver of peace. Such is the Church's high function in the human family ; yet how imperfectly does she fulfil it ! And what are the causes of her failure ? Why has she lost her power to keep in the community the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace ?

In the first place the Church has lost her own unity. The principle of differentiation has done its divisive work within her communion with fearful consequences. There was room for the operation of this principle even here, in a healthful way. Varieties of doctrine, of ritual, of character might well have been developed. It is not an evil thing that we have the different types of teaching and of administration which now exist. It is good to have the pietistic fervor of the Methodist and the intellectual vigor of the Presbyterian, and the

liturgic beauty of the Episcopalian, and the ethical thoroughness of the Liberal Christian and the staid simplicity of the Quaker; all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to each man severally as he will; but it is not good to have these set over against one another as exclusive and antagonistic sects. These hateful schisms have rent into fragments the Body of Christ. Here, to begin with, in our Western Christendom, is the great and fatal division between Catholic and Protestant, which is, in itself, a great gulf fixed between those who worship the same Lord, a gulf almost impassable; and there are hundreds of thousands of people in this country to-day who are devoting a good part of their time and strength to widening and deepening the chasm. The great majority of people of these two branches of the Christian Church will scarcely own one another as Christians; they hardly ever enter one another's churches—many of them, indeed, believe that to do so is a sin; and it is not uncommon for those on the one side of this line of division to entertain the most horrible suspicions and to circulate the most blood-curdling reports concerning the sinister purpose of those on the other side. In the great work of social integration now confronting us there is positively no single task more difficult, more discouraging, than that of

bringing these two great branches of the Christian Church into neighborly relations. The chronic inflammation which has been produced by three centuries of wars and persecutions and alienations seems to be almost irreducible. I will bring no accusations of prejudice against the Roman Catholics, for I am a Protestant; but I must say that the determination of millions of Protestants to believe evil and only evil, and that continually, of their Roman Catholic brethren is one of the most melancholy signs of the times. And these prejudices are always most intense in those neighborhoods where there is nothing but hearsay and imagination to feed them. I received a letter not long ago from a physician in a country town of Ohio inquiring whether it was really true that such and such infernal deeds had been done by the Roman Catholics of Columbus. Harrowing tales of this tenor were in circulation among his neighbors; and although, as he said, there was not, so far as he knew, a single Roman Catholic in his town, the people of that hamlet were lying awake nights for fear the Catholics were coming to burn their houses and butcher them in their beds.

Even among Protestants the sectarian animosities are often intense. In the pushing zeal of propagandism all principles of comity are disregarded; one denomination shrinks not

even from destroying the property of another by thrusting in its enterprises where it is clear that one or the other of the competitors must go to the wall. The question of uniting the community in fraternal bonds is about the last question that your loyal denominationalist will ask; his problem is to divide the flock and get as many as he can into his particular fold.

When the Church whose high calling it is to be the healer of breaches and the promoter of unity so far departs from the word and the ways of our Lord as to give place to these schisms in her own body, the case is indeed deplorable. Such a Church is almost certain to forget or mar her message. What do we find her teaching? Is it what Jesus taught when He went about the cities and the villages of Judea and Galilee? I have said already that the sound of this Gospel is still heard, as it has always been heard, in the churches of the land. God forbid that I should deny or belittle the value of the Church's testimony. Even as it has been preached, it has quickened many consciences, it has comforted many hearts, it has inspired many lives. Yet it has been a sadly confused and disproportionate message; it has been clogged and overlaid by all sorts of pettinesses and trivialities. The champions of the sects have had to exalt their own peculiarities; not one of these is of any vital importance; and to emphasize these is to make unity impossible.



Then the administration of the churches has often been such as to foster pride and exclusiveness and class distinctions. We must be careful here to avoid exaggeration. It is sometimes said that the working-classes have become alienated from the churches. From some of them, not from all of them. The great Roman Catholic church, in all lands, finds ample room for them in all its costliest sanctuaries. Nor have they departed from all of our Protestant churches. We have eight Congregational churches in my own city; in five of them, certainly, the great majority of the members belong to the working-classes. You will find hundreds of churches in all our great cities of which this is true. A great deal of rubbish is retailed from platforms and in newspapers on this subject. What is true is this, that there are *a great many* churches, especially in the aristocratic quarters of the cities, which they do not attend, and where they are not wanted; churches in which the spirit of caste does certainly prevail; churches in which the competitive methods of financiering give the best places to the largest purses, and make the position of the poor man quite intolerable. The sin and shame which we have to confess is not that all our churches are such—that is a slander; but that some of them are such, when of such there ought to be none. The fact that a great many churches in the cities are administered as if they

were private clubs, for the benefit of the genteel classes, is the fact that we have reason to deplore.

I fear that we must also say that there are a good many churches in which the tendency is strong to take a class view of all social questions; to regard the grievances of the laboring poor as wholly imaginary and their complaints and uprisings as evidences of depravity; to take sides, rather positively, with the employing class, in every struggle with the laboring class. Manifestly a church in which this sentiment prevails is not in a position to work for the reconciliation of the separated classes. It has itself become one of the elements of alienation—one of the parties to be reconciled.

Such, then, are some of the lamentable facts that we discover when we turn to the Church as the rightful leader in the work of social integration. We find that the Church is greatly disabled for the performance of this work. We find that she who ought to be the weaver of peace in the social household, has herself become in too many cases, the breeder of strife and division. We find that she to whom was spoken the parting benediction of her Lord, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you," has made but a poor use of this benign legacy. For surely, if the Church of Jesus Christ had but entered into this inheritance,

had but realized the significance of her high calling, had but girded herself for the work of promoting peace on earth and good-will among men, the troubles that now disturb our social life would be unknown. And I am constrained to bear witness that the chief blame for the strife of classes, for the social dislocations and divisions which are so serious and alarming, must be laid at the door of the Christian Church. To her was given the commission to keep the peace, and she has not kept it. To her was given the power to counteract those unsocial tendencies which have been created by the rapid differentiation of our industrial life, and she has been found wanting. I do not say that she has done nothing; I insist that with all her faults she has done much; that her inconsistencies have not altogether quenched the light that was given her to hold aloft; but I say that when you compare what she has done with what she might have done, and ought to have done, the showing is pitiful. And if to-day, with anointed vision, we could discern the form of One like the Son of man walking among those golden candlesticks whose light burns so dimly, we should see upon His face some shadow of the sorrow that blurred the stars that night in Gethsemane. Where is the prophetic voice that can call to this Church, pottering with her non-essentials, fussing with her

phylacteries, going through her pious motions, tithing the mint and anise and cumin of her vain distinctions, and rouse her to the tremendous charge that God has given her to keep ?

What, then, is the first duty of the Church of this day ? It seems to me that it is the duty of recognizing and realizing her own unity. This is not something to be done ; it is something to be seen, to be accepted and believed—that is all. People are often talking about Christian unity as if it were a commodity to be manufactured, something that the wit or the will of man could create or produce. It is nothing of the kind. There is no such thing as disunity *in the Church of Jesus Christ*,—any more than there is such a thing as darkness in the sun's pure ray. The Church of Jesus Christ is united. There may be a Presbyterian Church and a Congregational Church and a Methodist Church and a Roman Catholic Church, that are to some extent separated and alienated the one from the other, but just so far as this is true of them they are not of Christ but of anti-Christ. The members that are joined to the head are one body.

And this union is not and cannot be a matter of mere pious sentiment, it must be a matter of active co-operation. There is no worse hypocrisy on the face of the earth than much of the sentimental unity with which the sects

are wont to regale themselves now and then in union meetings, when they sing pleasant songs together and talk of the blessedness of fraternity and then go out and violate all laws of comity and all principles of decency in their fierce competitions. This unity must be visible to all the world, else it is valueless.

Where shall we begin to realize it? Right where we are. It is no great national movement for the consolidation of denominations that we want: that task is hopeless. The men who are the custodians and engineers of the denominational machinery would be leaders in that enterprise, and they are apt to be the last men who wish for its success. It is in the local community, the city or the village, that this work must begin. It is here, if anywhere, that the fact of unity will be discoverable. What is the Church? Where is the Church?

The Congregationalist says that the local congregation of believers is the Church, and that there is no other. Most Protestant sects agree with the Congregationalists in calling the local congregation a church, but they apply the word also to the national organization, the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, the Presbyterian Church in the United States, et cetera. Now it may be difficult to refrain from calling the local congregation a church; but the word may be more properly

applied not to the local congregation, but to the whole number of devout and faithful people, dwelling in any town or city, and then to the whole number of devout and faithful people dwelling in the nation. As to the national denominations, so called, they are not churches at all, and have no right to the name ; they are sects and schisms, nothing better. But there is a Church in the city where you live, and there is but one Church there. Jesus Christ never has but one Church in any town or city. Anybody belongs to it who follows Him, and nobody belongs to it who does not follow Him. This Church may have many different congregations, and may worship by many different rites, but it is one Church ; the fact of its unity is the central fact of its existence. If that fact has been obscured by traditions and commandments of men, our first business is to clear it and make it manifest.

The different congregations of this Church in your town or city are surely more closely and vitally joined together, if, indeed, they are truly Christian congregations, than any one of them can be joined to any other congregation in another town or city. The ties that bind each of these to its nearest neighbors must be nearer and more real than those which bind it to some congregation of similar name to its own in some distant city. It may be that one

of these congregations in your city could co-operate with other congregations in other cities for some useful purposes; but the interests with which such co-operation are concerned are remote and insignificant compared with the interests that are common to them as members of the one Church of their own municipality. The actual fellowship, the actual co-operation in Christian work must be here in the one Church to which they all belong. Your city is the parish of this Church, and the enterprise of occupying this parish and cultivating it, by harmonious and efficient labor is one which must require the united and consentaneous activity of the whole Church. This Church has no right to split itself into fragments and scatter its forces all over the field, carrying on its work in desultory, haphazard, unmethodical ways, having no consultations and no common understandings; much less has it the right to countenance or permit the strifes and competitions by which workers get in each other's way and neutralize each other's efforts. If there is but one Church in your city that Church must know itself as one, and must do works meet for unity. Those who are of Christ can unite; to say that they cannot is infidelity and blasphemy. And this is the first duty of the Christians of every city, to discern and manifest the fact of their unity. There will be many

diversities among them, but if the mind of Christ is in them the things about which they differ will be trifling compared with the things in which they agree. And when these Christians come together, loyal to their common Lord, mindful of His prayer that they all may be one, Protestant and Catholic giving one another the right hand of fellowship and magnifying the truths that they hold in common; Liberal and Orthodox kneeling together to pray "Thy Kingdom come"; all men of good-will giving voice to their good-will; all the sons of peace blessing one another in the name of the Lord, some good foundation will be laid for that good work of social integration which the Church has so imperfectly done.

Having thus realized its unity, the Church will be prepared to receive and to utter its message. What must that message be? Manifestly it cannot be those confused and jangled cries to which our ears have been accustomed; it will not be laying over and over again its doctrines of baptisms and of laying on of hands, and of forms and rites and ordinances; it will leave these rudiments and go on to something higher. Its consciousness of unity will drive from its thoughts these petty concerns; if indeed it knows that there can be but one Lord, one faith, one baptism, then it has discovered that there is one God and Father of all who is



above all and through all and in all. This is the truth that Jesus lived to manifest and died to confirm, and it is a truth with mighty social consequences, if men will only believe it. Surely if the Christian Church stands for anything it stands for this—that all men have a common Father; that God hath made of one blood all the nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth. This fact of the divine Fatherhood has often been treated by the Church as a kind of theologic fiction,—as a possibility, perhaps, rather than a reality. Men might become the sons of God, we have imagined, by some occult process; but the fact of their present sonship has not been recognized. Now I suppose that the prayer which Jesus taught us is a universal prayer; that every human being has a right to say “Our Father which art in heaven,” and that this is the one indestructible, irrepealable, indubitable fact about human nature; that the eternal Love which is behind all law is the Father of all,—Father of Chinaman and Patagonian and African and American; Father of patrician and plebian, of philosopher and hind, of landlord and tenant, of employer and employee, of almoner and pauper, of saint and sinner; that this fact of divine Fatherhood and human brotherhood, underlies all human institutions, and relations; that governments must rest upon

it and seek to realize it; that industry must be ruled by it; that traffic must respect it; that it must furnish the fundamental reason for all right human conduct. This is the central truth of the Gospel, and the Church of God must proclaim it, not with bated breath, and dubious tone, but with the emphasis of conviction.

The Church has really no other word to speak until she has made this word quick and powerful over the consciences of men. "Sirs, ye are brethren, why do ye wrong one to another,"—this is her message; woe to her if she do not burn it into the consciences of the striving multitudes. Ye are brethren! All this social strife is unnatural, fratricidal. What men call "natural law," by which they mean the law of greed and strife, the ethics of Rob Roy,—

" The good old rule, the simple plan,  
That he should take who has the power  
And he should keep who can,"

is not a natural law; it is an unnatural law; it is a crime against nature; the law of brotherhood is the only natural law. The law of nature is the law of sympathy, of fellowship, of mutual help and service. It is only when a man owns the bond that binds him to his kind that he has any chance of becoming a man.

“Ye are brethren!” Masters and men, struggling over the product of industry, do you not know that this strife is shameful; that you ought to be helpers one of another; that if, instead of trying each to get as much as he can away from his brother, you would try each to give as much as he can to his brother, you would all be a great deal happier and a great deal richer too? Can you not see that this law of strife by which you are trying to live is not only sinful but senseless? “Ye are brethren!” Keep it in mind, you superintendents of factories; the human beings that tend your whirling wheels and clattering looms are your brethren. Keep it in mind, you managers of the great department houses; those pale-faced crowds that I see in the early morning hurrying into your gates, to spend a long day there in labor for you, at what stipend you know—these are your brethren and your sisters—children of your Father. Keep it in mind, madam; the maid in your kitchen says the same prayer that you say, albeit the language may be different: “Our Father,” in Latin words has still the same meaning. Keep it in mind, in your federations and councils and unions, you children of toil; the men that you are working for and striving against—what a melancholy antithesis!—and about whom you say a great many bitter and unreasonable words, they are your

brethren; is not a little brotherly feeling and speaking due on your part? Have they not some burdens that you can help to bear? Could you not by hearty good-will toward them, make it easier for them to be kind to you?

If the Church of God could only get men to believe all this, how long should we wait for the beginning of the thousand years of peace?

Other messages, quite in harmony with this, the Church has to deliver. For it is not only true that God is the Father of men, it is also true that He is the Love which is behind all law, and that the whole world belongs to Him; that His redeeming grace is above all and through all; that the clouds in the sky reflect His glory, and the forest whispers of His power, and all creatures bear witness of His goodness; and that through all the mighty on-goings of Nature and of History He is working out His great designs—

“ That God who ever lives and loves,  
One God, one law, one element ;  
And one far-off divine event  
To which the whole creation moves.”

If this is true, then all life is sacred, and all work is holy, and all service is divine. The old distinctions between the secular and the religious are not only meaningless but mischievous. The apostle told us that whether we eat

or drink or whatever we do, we must do all to the glory of God. I suppose that he meant exactly what he said. The spiritual law, the spiritual motive, the loving thought, the kindly purpose govern the whole of life. A factory is never rightly run till the law of love is the supreme motive power. A trades-union is a menace to society until good-will to all men is the guiding principle in all its councils. A corporation without this clause is a curse to society. A railway whose administration sets this law at defiance is a gigantic public enemy. A city of whose corporate life love is not the organic law is the vestibule of pandemonium. Every one of these departments of life must be brought under this royal law. This is what religion means. The moment you let it mean anything less than this its dignity departs and its power is paralyzed.

The Church has greatly failed to grasp and enforce this central truth. Too often she has made religion a special and separate interest; the distinction has been sharply drawn between worldliness and other worldliness; salvation has been mainly deliverance from hell and the guaranty of heaven. Religion has been one thing by itself, and business, politics, amusement have been separate realms with codes of their own which religion could not question. To stamp out this hoary heresy is one of the urgent duties

of the Church. There is no more reason why a minister of the gospel should be prayerful, and unselfish and consecrated than there is why the superintendent of a factory or the manager of a newspaper, or a bank, or the president of a trades-union, or the member of a city council, or a legislature should be prayerful and unselfish and consecrated; each is God's servant, whether he will or no; each has in his hands the task by God appointed; each has and can have no other law for his conduct than the eternal and universal law of love. It is no more a matter of choice whether a man shall be subject to that law than whether he shall be subject to the law of gravitation. It is the only law of human association. What is the Church of God doing, that she leaves men in doubt on this subject, and permits them, sitting in her sanctuaries, to solace themselves with the delusion that religion is a passport to Paradise and not the building here in the world of the city of God ?

Then let her keep these great truths always before her thought in all the ordering of her congregations, in all the manifestation of her fellowship. Let her not have a better place in her assemblies for the man with a gold ring and goodly apparel than for the man in homespun garb; let her not forget that God has chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith to

be heirs of His kingdom. Above all let her beware lest she become a conscious partaker of the reward of iniquity; lest the blood of them that have been slain by the greed and extortion of their fellow-men cry to God from her altars!

If the Church of God could but hear the voice that is calling her to the work she has neglected, to the testimony she has failed to utter, to the glorious service she is summoned to perform in behalf of human kind, I do most profoundly believe that the social troubles that now disturb and appall us would soon be at an end. When a united Church strips away the fineries of scholasticism and ritualism and sentimentalism with which so long she has been decked and fettered, and putting to her mouth the silver trumpet proclaims as her one message the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, the sacredness of all honest work and the divineness of all human service, pouring all the energy of her faith and the might of her enthusiasm into the work of making men believe these central truths of Christ's Gospel, then we shall have the true counterpoise of that social differentiation which is now rending society into fragments; we shall see that principle of integration at work which will hold us back from chaos and lead the old world safely into the shining paths of peace.

The State itself, with such a fire as this burn-

ing in the heart of it, would cease to be a mere institute of rights, and would become, what it was meant to be, the union of all for the common good. What else but this could any State be if its citizens were men of good-will?

Let me say to you, my friends, that there seems to me absolutely no solution of the social problem except that which we have found this evening. Something can be done by better political adjustments, but not much. It is the spiritual life of this nation that needs deepening; it is the whole conception of what life means that must be changed. You may have your critical reasons for not accepting the leadership of the Church of Christ; but, somehow, you have got to get the substance of the thing that the Gospel of Christ is into the hearts of men if you want to save society. That King and Lawgiver whom I know as Jesus Christ has given, I do most devoutly believe, the law by which men must live together; and I do not believe that they will ever live happily and prosperously together under any other law. Some one whom I do not know has written me a kind little note in which I find this sentence: "It seems to me that our city (and State and federal) government is bad because the natural law of self-preservation is stronger than the law of love!" Stronger for what? To build or to destroy? If it is what



makes all our governments bad, it must be stronger to destroy. And is it, then, a natural law? Shall we call that a natural law of conduct whose inevitable tendency is social destruction? I am sure that my friend can hardly believe this. It is not by itself a natural law. It is the very essence and epitome of all that is unnatural. This is the truth which we are slowly coming to understand. The absurdity of following a rule of conduct that is hurling us to chaos will not need, after a little, to be soberly argued. The day is not far off when the world will see that the way of love is the only way of life.

THE END.







## INDEX

- Absenteeism of employers, 24  
Acme Sucker Rod Company, Toledo, 27  
Adams, Charles Francis, 142, 145  
Amsterdam, Holland, health of, 169  
Analysis, the prevailing scientific method, 196  
Apprenticeship, trades-unions and, 68  
Art collections in cities, 178  
Atchison Railway Company, 111  
*Atlantic Monthly*, 23, 25  
  
Baker, C. W., 140  
Banks, national, quasi-public corporations, 117  
Bascom, John, 70, 131, 143  
Bath-houses in cities, 172, 173  
Bemis, E. W., 68  
Benefit societies, trades-unions as, 59  
Berlin, Germany, care of the poor in, 179  
Birmingham, England, bath-houses in, 173  
Black, Jeremiah, 127  
Bonham, J. M., 144  
Booth, Charles, 17  
Bradley, Justice, 127  
Breslau, Germany, 176  
Brotherhood of man, 220-222  
Burnett, John, 62, 81  
Buttons, domestic manufacture of, 7  
  
California forbids railway passes, 150  
Caste in the churches, 211

- Catholic and Protestant, 208, 209  
 Charity of the churches, 206  
 Chemnitz, Germany, 176  
 Cheney Silk Mills, Connecticut, 27  
 Chicago city government, 185  
 Child-labor in factories, 15, 40-42  
 Church, the, 192-227 ; integrating function of, 203 ; its mission to incarnate and manifest the life of Christ, 205 ; what it has done for social unity, 206 ; the weaver of peace, 207 ; what it has failed to do, 207 ; has lost its own unity, 207 ; varieties of administration desirable, 207 ; mischiefs of schism, 208 ; Protestant and Catholic, 209 ; how the message is marred, 210 ; the working classes and, 211 ; tendency to take a class view of social questions, 212 ; chiefly to blame for social divisions, 213 ; first duty to realize her own unity, 214 ; the local community the place to begin, 215 ; definition of the Church, 216 ; national sects not churches, 216 ; but one Church in any town or city, 216, 217 ; the one message of the Church, 219-222 ; the law of love the only law of life, 222-227  
 Churches as corporations, 86  
 Cities, 155-191 ; growth of, 155-158 ; proportion of urban to rural population, 158 ; possibilities of development, 159, 160 ; the municipality defined and described, 151-163 ; tendency to collectivism in, 165, 166 ; light and transportation in, 167 ; sanitary problem of, 169 ; improved health of, 169, 170 ; the abolition of the slums, 170-172 ; free baths in, 172, 173 ; work-houses, 174 ; parks and play-grounds, 174-176 ; music in European, 177 ; collections of art in, 178 ; libraries, 178 ; schools, 178 ; care of the poor in, 179-181 ; moral value of good government, 182 ; failure of good government in American cities, 183 ; corruption and inefficiency, 184, 185 ; effect on public morals, 186 ; reason of this failure, 187-189 ; the only remedy, 190  
 Clerical rates on railways, 151  
 Clothing, domestic manufacture of, 7

- Coke, Edward, 85  
 Collectivism in cities, 165  
 Colleges as corporations, 86  
 Cologne, Germany, 176  
 Competition tends to social disintegration, 195  
 Cooley, Thomas M., on corporations, 83  
 Corporations, 82-115 ; Cooley's definition of, 83 ; public and private, 84 ; quasi-public, 84 ; Isham's description of, 85 ; Lord Coke's dictum, 85 ; educational, 86 ; religious, 87 ; relation to large system of industry, 88 ; liability to abuses, 90 ; influence of, upon morals, 91, 92 ; aggravation of inequalities, 93-96 ; depressing effect upon the spirit of enterprise, 97, 98 ; relation to Socialism, 98, 99 ; saving influence of, 99 ; can be reformed, 102 ; regulation by law, 102 ; rule of publicity applied to, 103-106 ; compared with trades-unions, 106-109 ; instances of oppression by, 111-113 ; must find souls, 113  
 Councils, municipal, in America, 183 ; in European cities, 189  
 Coyle, John P., 108  
 Crafts, W. F., 120  
 Curtis, George Tichnor, 120  
  
 Debs, Eugene V., 112  
 Denominational varieties, 207  
 Differentiation and integration in society, 192-199  
 Discrimination in railway rates, 135 *seq.*  
 Dockers, London, 69  
 Domestic system of industry, 6, 7  
 Dorner, Ignatius, 35  
 Dresden, Germany, 176  
 Drummond, Henry, 191  
  
 "Economics of Industry," by Marshall, 45, 47  
 Eminent Domain, 123, 125  
 Employer, responsible for employees, 19 ; shepherd of a flock,

- Factory, definition of, 8 ; a social force, 18 ; an unsocial force, 25
- Factory legislation, 51
- Factory system, has superseded domestic system, 7 ; founded on invention and division of labor, 8 ; extension of, 9 ; social significance of, 10, 11 ; effect upon the efficiency of labor, 12 ; has enriched the commonwealth, 13 ; sanitary gains and losses of, 13-17 ; married women under, 14, 15 ; child-labor under, 15 ; tends to divide society, 19-23 ; losses of through over-specialization, 21 ; permits absenteeism, 24 : effect on the home, 27-34 ; female labor increasing under, 31 ; founded in social nature of man, 35
- Factory-workers, number and product of, 12
- Fairbanks Scale Works, 27
- Familistere at Guise, 27, 166
- Fatherhood of God, 218, 219
- Female labor increasing, 31
- Frankfort, Germany, 176
- Fraser, Rt. Rev. James, on trades-unions, 52
- Gas, in English cities, 167
- Girls in factories, 30
- Glasgow, 172-174
- Guilds of Middle Ages, 45-47
- Hadley, Arthur T., 105
- Hague, The, health of, 169
- "History of Trade Unionism," 55
- Hobson, J. A., 31, 33
- Home-life and the factory, 34
- Hours of labor, reduction of, 39
- Hudson, J. F., 121*n*, 123, 137
- "Hull House Papers," 17
- Industry, the new, ethics of, 4 ; domestic, 4 ; large system of, 88
- Industrial revolution, 48
- Infant mortality, among children of factory-workers, 14
- Integration, social, the need of the hour, 198

- Inter-State Commerce Commission, 145, 152  
Isham, Edward S., 85, 88  
Jevons, W. S., 15, 63  
Kingdom of Heaven, 204  
Kirkup, Thomas, 98  
Labor Unions, 44-81 ; methods of sometimes vicious, 44 ; in the beginning warlike, 53 ; treated as enemies of society, 54-56 ; Parliamentary Commission on, 58 ; legalized in England, 58 ; benefit societies, 59, 60 ; efforts to secure improved conditions of work, 60 ; educational value of, 61 ; as instruments for raising wages, 62-67 ; strikes and lock-outs, 64 ; the standing army of labor, 65 ; attitude toward prison labor, 67 ; limitation of apprenticeship, 68 ; attitude toward unorganized labor, 64-72 ; violence employed by, 70 ; ethnic morality of, 72-76 ; sectarianism of, 80  
Land-grants to railways, 124  
Leipsic, Germany, 176  
Libraries in cities, 178  
Lighting in cities, 167  
London County Council, 172, 182  
Louvre, Paris, 178  
Machines, displacing men, 36  
Machinery, increase in productive power of, 39  
Mackenzie, J. S., 156  
Manchester, England, bathing houses in, 173  
Manufacturers, earliest English, 50, 51  
Marshall, Alfred, 45, 47, 50, 63, 65  
Masonic lodges, 46  
Moral influence of municipal government, 182, 186  
Munich, Germany, parks in, 176  
Municipal government, in America, failure of, 183  
Music in cities, 177  
Nelson Manufacturing Company, 27  
Nuremberg, Germany, 176  
Oldham, England, working men as capitalists in, 26

- Parasitic corporations, 130
- Paris, parks in, 175
- Parks and play-grounds in cities, 174, 175
- Parliamentary Commission on trades-unions, 58
- Passes on railways, 151
- Patten, Simon N., 170
- Political economy, fatalism in, 2
- Poor, care of, in cities, 179-181
- Population of cities, 158
- Prison labor, trades-unions and, 67
- Proctor and Gamble Company, 27
- Public opinion and the labor question, 39
- Publicity, rule of, in corporations, 103-106
  
- Railways, 116-154 ; quasi-public character of, 119 *seq.* ; not private companies, 120 ; creatures of the legislature, 121 ; acquire land by exercise of eminent domain, 123 ; public gifts of land to, 124 ; Chancellor Walworth on, 126 ; Justice Bradley on, 127 ; Justice Black's opinion, 127 ; relations to stockholders, 129 ; parasitic corporations connected with, 130 ; legal interest of the public in, 133 ; discriminations of, 135-138 ; competition of tends to monopoly, 134 ; rate-cutting, 142-145 ; Inter-State Commerce Commission, 145 ; cannot be managed on competitive principles, 147, 148 ; must be controlled by the State, 149 ; hindrances to State control, 151-154
- Reade, Charles, 57
  
- Sanitary conditions of factories, 13-17
- Sanitation of cities, 169
- Saunders, William, 57
- Schools in cities, 178
- Sects and schisms, 208
- Shaftesbury, the Earl of, 51
- Shailer, Nathaniel P., 196
- Shaw, Albert, 159, 170, 173, 177, 179
- Sheffield outrages, 57
- Sherman, John, 112



- Slums, 170-172  
Smyth, Newman, 195  
Social control, 2  
Social organism, 192  
Social settlement, the best kind of, 37  
Socialism and corporations, 98, 99  
Society, primitive, homogeneous, 194  
Specialization in medicine, 196  
Spencer, Herbert, 91  
Spoils System, 201  
State, the, as an integrating force, 199-203 ; true conception  
    of, 200 ; not merely a police power, 203 ; what it may be-  
    come, 225  
Straw-plaiting, domestic, 7  
Strikes and lockouts, 64  
Stuttgart, Germany, 176  
Sugar-trust, 112  
  
Tangye Brothers, Birmingham, 27  
Trade Unions, see Labor Unions.  
"Trade Unions," by William Trant, 45  
Trant, William, 45  
Transportation, in cities, 167  
  
Vanderbilt, W. H., 120  
  
Walker, Francis A., 95  
Walworth, Chancellor, 126  
Wash-houses in cities, 174  
Weaver of peace, the Church, 207  
Webb, Sidney and Beatrice, "History of Trade Unionism,"  
    55, 56  
Whips, braiding of, 7  
Women, married, in factories, 29  
Woollen manufacture, domestic, 5, 6  
Working men as capitalists, 26 ; in the churches, 211  
Wright, Carroll D., 8, 9, 14, 22, 28



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